

Community-Based Dance Education in Eugene, Oregon

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Community-Based Dance Education in Eugene, Oregon

Approved _____

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M.S. Arts Management *University of Oregon, Eugene, OR*

June 2009

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- Vice Representative of the Arts Administration Student Forum
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June 2008

- Graduate level studies in Financial Management, Grant Writing, Resource Development, and Nonprofit Management

B.S. Biology *Bates College, Lewiston, ME*

June 1996

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- Year-long senior research thesis on salt marsh ecology
- Semester abroad to Lamu, Kenya with the School for International Training (Spring, 1995)

Arts and Administration Experience

Administrative Director

September 2008 - Present

Sparkplug Dance Educational Resources, Eugene, OR

- Managed studio dance program for children, including marketing, registration, payment, scheduling, and customer service
- Coordinated annual appeal and other fundraising activities, including yearly fundraising event
- Created monthly e-newsletters and managed mailing lists
- Tracked financial activity, including donations, tuition payment, and sponsorships and kept accurate records of all transactions

Musical Theater Camp Director

November 2008 - Present

Dance Teacher

Summer 2004 - Present

Arts Umbrella Summer Musical Theater Camp, Eugene, OR

- Managed summer camp program for youth, including program budgeting, marketing, hiring of teaching staff, and on-site program supervision
- Taught Musical Theatre Dance, Jazz, and movement to 8 -18 year olds
- Developed age-appropriate, engaging curriculum and choreography, and effectively managed groups of 15-60 students in a camp setting

Program Coordinator, International Cultural Service Program

Sept 2006 – December 2008

University of Oregon, International Affairs, Eugene, OR

- Managed a cross-cultural program which sends students from over 40 countries into the community to give educational presentations about their country and culture
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- Supervised 54 international students, co-taught educational leadership seminar, and facilitated monthly program meetings

**Youth Theatre Education Committee
Theatre Office Manager**

July 2006 – October 2008
March 2005 – July 2006

Cottage Theatre, Cottage Grove, OR

- Designed and developed youth arts education programs as part of a leadership team
- Created publicity flyers, drafted program budgets, and designed program evaluations for students and instructional staff
- Managed Cottage Theatre's box office, including single ticket sales and season subscriptions
- Coordinated annual giving campaign and kept detailed records of all financial transactions
- Supervised volunteer staff and trained new employees

Marketing Intern

Summer 2007

Eugene Symphony, Eugene, OR

- Wrote press releases, facilitated comp ticket requests and marketing list trades, and compiled annual report
- Researched best practices in Symphony website design, proposed design improvements, and presented findings to Executive Director and Marketing Director
- Revised educational curriculum for the Symphony's youth performances

Grant Writer

Summer 2007

Sparkplug Dance Educational Resources, Eugene, OR

- Wrote and successfully submitted grant proposals to Northwest foundations, and created boilerplate language for future proposals
- Created data management system to track individual contributors and business sponsors, as well as a comprehensive grants database

House Manager

October 2005 – October 2006

Robinson Theatre, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

- Ensured the smooth operation of all front of house activities, while providing excellent patron service
- Trained and supervised volunteer ushers, reconciled ticket and concession sales, and kept records of all transactions

Coordinator, National Dance Week Celebration

September 2003 – June 2004

Lane Community College, Eugene, OR

- Coordinated all aspects of LCC's annual National Dance Week Celebration, a week of free lectures, workshops, guest artists, and master classes
- Hired guest artists, solicited volunteers, wrote press releases, and coordinated thank you efforts

Skills and Interests

- Skilled in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign), and Filemaker Pro
- Choreographer, performer, and stage manager for professional and community theatre
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- Travel to Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Mexico, France, and Costa Rica

Community-Based Dance Education in Eugene, Oregon

Abstract

While scholarly research addresses dance education in K-12 schools and higher education, there is little attention given to non-school programs such as parks and recreation dance classes, private dance studios, or community arts dance programs. Such programs often act as an entry point to dance education. In this research, I use an extensive literature review, document analysis, and in-depth interviews to focus on four case study sites and their organizational structure, programs, personnel, goals, partnerships and community engagement. Through this research, I aim to describe and understand community-based dance education in Eugene, Oregon.

Keywords

Dance education, community-based arts, arts/dance policy, community youth arts, out-of-school time

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Chapter One: Introduction and Methodology

Problem Statement

While the importance of dance education as a means of integrating physical, emotional, and intellectual skills has been noted by policy makers (Persky, Sandene, & Askew, 1997), dance education is notably missing from the public school system (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999, p.1). Opportunities for dance education seem to exist largely during out-of-school time; many youth receive their initial training in private studios, nonprofit dance organizations, or parks and recreation programs (Kerr-Berry, 2003). Despite the fact that non-school programs create many opportunities for disciplined study in the arts, community-based youth programs have received little attention within academic and policy circles (Heath, 1998, p.1). While literature addresses dance education in K-12 schools or at higher education institutions (Dunkin, 2004; Giguere, 2005; Warburton, 2006; Hagood, 2007), the significance and impact of community-based dance programs has been largely unexplored. This research will address this gap in the literature and will seek to describe and understand community-based dance programs, specifically in Eugene, Oregon.

For my research purposes, community-based dance programs include nonprofit dance organizations, privately owned dance studios, parks and recreation programs, community arts education programs, or dance classes by individual instructors. Dance classes in tap, jazz, ballet, modern, hip-hop, and other techniques may be offered in seasonal sessions or as drop-in classes at dance studios & centers. Although community programs teach both adults and children, this study focuses on youth dance education. While the primary intent of the research is to inform dance

educators and arts administrators in Eugene, this type of study may also yield valuable information about community-based dance education and contribute to the increasing dialogue about the role of the arts in out of school time.

Theoretical Framework

This study addresses dance education, national, state, and local level policies affecting the arts, and community-based dance programs and their structure, programs, personnel, goals, and partnerships (Appendix A). This study places community-based dance programs in Eugene, Oregon at its center, and the research will largely be concerned with the who, where, what, how, and whys of these programs. However, to frame the greater context within which community-based dance education exists, a close look at federal, state, and local level policies, as well as an examination of community arts and out-of-school time issues is necessary.

Policy, legislation, and funding on the federal, state, and local levels can directly or indirectly impact arts education, in ways such as providing dollars to carry out programs, to leveraging support and recognition for arts and arts organizations. For example, one specific federal agency, the National Endowment for the Arts has been a financial contributor to the growth of American dance as a field since its inception, and has funded broad-reaching dance education initiatives (NEA, 2000). The federal and state governments work as complementary partners in funding the arts. State and regional arts agencies rely upon federal leadership and funding in identifying and addressing cultural needs (<http://www.tcg.org/advocacy/importance.cfm>). Additionally, at a local level, a community's participation in and support for dance may have direct impact on dance education offerings. For instance, in Eugene, the 2007 Eugene Cultural Census Report revealed that, among the dance activities tested, about half of respondents indicated that they enjoy attending

various types of dance performance at least occasionally, though few report any sort of dance attendance as “a vital activity” (Wolf Brown, 2007, p. 4). Findings such as these help illustrate the landscape in which dance education takes place.

In addition to policy and its implications, several areas of dance education will be explored. The field of community-based dance education will be defined and its history examined. Since a large body of literature in dance education pertains to K-12 and higher education systems, I will review this literature as a means of extrapolating it to community-based programs. Issues that emerge in the dance education literature, including defining, advocating for, and creating access to dance education, will also be explored.

Introduction to the Cases

To explore the range of community-based dance education programs in Eugene, Oregon, four cases were examined. Case study sites were purposively selected to provide in-depth information about dance education in Eugene. At least one study site was selected from each of the following broad categories of community-based programs: privately owned (for profit) studios, nonprofit dance organizations, and parks and recreation programs. Sites included the 501(c) 3 organizations Sparkplug Dance Educational Resources and Ballet Fantastique, the privately owned studio, On Your Toes School of Dance, and the Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center. These organizations differ significantly in their goals and structure, but each provides dance education opportunities to youth in a non-school setting.

Methodological Paradigm

In this study I position myself as an interpretivist researcher, or one who examines “what is meaningful or relevant to the people being studied” (Neuman, 2006, p. 88). The interpretivist

paradigm best frames my research as it suggests qualitative research methods and an emergent research design. My research question is not one that can be answered through experimentation; rather, through grounded theory, the research questions are constantly reassessed through examination of the collected data (Neuman, 2006, p. 60). I seek to understand a complex web of organizations and individuals and learn through examination of their experiences, successes and challenges.

Research Questions

This study is exploratory in nature; describing and understanding community-based youth dance education, and posing questions for future research will be the primary research goals. The main research question of this study is:

- **What is a framework for describing and understanding community-based dance education programs in Eugene, Oregon?**

Additional sub questions will include:

- How are community-based dance education programs structured?
- How are these programs funded?
- What kinds of programs do community-based organizations deliver?
- Who are the teachers in such programs and how are they trained and/or hired?
- How do the goals of community-based dance education programs relate or differ?
- What kinds of partnerships exist between community-based dance education programs and K-12 school systems or the larger community?

Definitions

Dance education exists within many contexts (i.e. dance studios, schools, fitness centers, community groups and programs) and ranges from pre-professional training to improvisational studies to educational/integrative activities. For the purposes of this study, community-based dance education is defined as formal study of dance and/or movement that is taught by qualified dance teachers or teaching artists and takes place in a community setting. While community-based dance education programs may partner with K-12 or schools or higher education institutions, they do not exist within those settings, and include, but are not limited to, parks and recreation programs, private studios, and nonprofit settings.

Delimitations

I will narrow the scope of my study with the following delimitations:

- Location and setting – the study will include dance organizations within the city limits of Eugene, Oregon. I will not examine programs that take place in schools (K-12 or higher education), although community-based dance programs may have partnerships or relationships with schools.
- Types of dance programs – I will focus on programs that offer youth dance instruction in creative movement, ballet, modern, tap, jazz, and/or hip-hop. I will not examine ballroom dance, gymnastic programs, competitive dance, dance teams/cheerleading, or ethnic dance programs. While a great number of dance classes for adults do exist, in this research only youth dance programs will be explored.

Role of the Researcher

As a dancer and a dance educator, I come to this research with strong biases based on this training. For example, I have a strong passion for dance and believe that dance education is extremely important for every human. Second, I have lived in the Eugene area for several years and have formed opinions, based on observation or hearsay, about certain community-based dance organizations. Third, since beginning my research, I have become employed by one of my case study sites (Sparkplug Dance), and am thus privy to insider information that may shape my analysis. Acknowledging these biases throughout my research and practicing self-reflexivity will be important to maintaining the validity of my study.

Limitations

This study is limited by its size and scope, as well as its narrow geographic focus. While the lessons learned from this study may be of interest to other dance educators and arts administrators, the results cannot be generalized to the field of dance education as a whole.

Benefits of the Study

The primary benefit of this study will be its contribution to the body of dance education literature, as well as the community arts and out-of-school time literature. Specifically, this study will examine a little-researched area of dance education, community-based dance. It may also contribute to defining the cultural sector in one mid-sized United States city.

Research Design

Exploring the main research question: *What is a framework for describing and understanding community-based dance education dance education in Eugene, Oregon?* is the first step in identifying larger issues for future consideration. Because my research attempts to close a gap in the knowledge

that currently exists, it is largely exploratory in nature. Qualitative, open-ended research methods allow the study to follow twists and turns and to take advantage of unexpected findings. Several qualitative methods have been used to conduct my research: a thorough literature review, document analysis, and case studies. The literature review provides an important contextual and policy framework, pointing to data and events that have shaped dance education, community arts, and dance education policy. Document analysis and case studies offer an in-depth understanding of the research topic while allowing me to best observe individuals and organizations and construct knowledge from their experiences and ideas. Case study sites have been purposively selected to provide thick description about dance education programs. Following the guidelines put forth in the delimitations section of this proposal, study sites were selected as an opportunity to learn about community-based dance education. Research participants include arts administrators and dance teachers from Eugene programs Sparkplug Dance Educational Resources, Ballet Fantastique, On Your Toes School of Dance, and the Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study includes literature review, document analysis, and comparative case study. There are two primary research instruments, one for document analysis, the other for semi-structured interviews with arts administrators and dance educators (Appendices B and C). Interviews were conducted in-person or via email, and ranged from one half hour to one hour long. Recruitment took place via an introductory letter that explained the study and was provided in hard copy form to potential participants (Appendix D).

In order to obtain necessary consent from participants, a consent form explaining the rights and responsibilities of the researcher and participant was created (Appendix E). Written consent was obtained prior to the interview.

Data was recorded in the form of handwritten notes, digital recordings, and on the researcher's personal computer. Each interview was audio recorded and accompanied by handwritten notes. Document analysis was done through hand written notes and computer entries.

Coding and Analysis

All data was coded according to major concepts or themes of this study. Data was examined for patterns that lead to a clearer understanding of community-based dance education in Eugene, Oregon. Codes include programs, community engagement and/or partnerships, dancer training and teacher selection, program goals, and organizational structure. Phrases or chunks of information pertaining to these themes are identified within the data (written transcriptions, document analysis), and have been grouped with like themes, to form patterns for further analysis.

Strategies for Validating Findings

Triangulation of methods is an important part of establishing credibility and validating findings in this study. The subject of community-based dance education is approached using three different methods: literature review, document analysis, and case study. Biases, including the role of the researcher, have been openly stated and self-reflexivity has been practiced.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into four chapters. Chapter One provides an overview of the research problem and data collection techniques. Chapter Two presents an in-depth literature review of dance education and issues related to the field. Chapter Three summarizes data collected

from interviews and document analysis of the four case study sites. Finally, Chapter Four synthesizes the findings of this study, discusses the implications of the study, and makes recommendations for further inquiry.

In summary, this research examines a little researched area of dance education, community-based dance education. Centering my study on dance education in Eugene, Oregon, I conducted qualitative, exploratory research through literature review, document analysis, and comparative case studies. Case studies sites were purposively selected from each of the following types of dance education programs: nonprofit dance organizations, privately owned studios, and parks and recreation programs. This research will add to the body of dance education literature and will contribute to the dialogue about the arts in out-of-school time.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Community-based dance education lies at the convergence of dance education and community arts. For the purpose of this study, community-based dance education is defined as formal study of dance and/or movement that takes place in a community setting. Community-based dance education programs are those that do not exist within a K-12 or higher education setting, and include, but are not limited to, parks and recreation programs, private studios, and nonprofit settings.

In order to more fully understand this field, and to frame my understanding of community-based dance education in Eugene, Oregon, I researched the history and current trends in community-based dance and community youth arts, dance education, and policy issues in dance education. In this chapter, I summarize my literature review and present a historical overview of community-based dance education, discuss teacher training and certification, dance curriculum and pedagogy, and provide an overview of community arts and out-of-school time. I also discuss three issues that emerged from the dance education literature, defining, positioning, and providing access to dance education, and describe policy issues in dance at the federal, state, and local levels. Finally, I present an overview of dance education offerings in Eugene, Oregon.

Introduction

At eight years of age, I told my mother I wanted to take a dance class. Following the recommendation of my friend and neighbor, I enrolled at Pauline's School of Dance, which, for many years, was housed in the basement of Pauline's home. Classes in tap, jazz, and ballet culminated in our annual recital on the High School stage. Elaborate costumes and popular music were an integral part of these performance experiences. Technique was often overshadowed by flair,

but after studying with Pauline for 6 years, I had a foundation in dance technique that enabled me to succeed years later in university dance training.

My own path is perhaps not dissimilar from many young people's entrée to dance education.

Posey (2002) describes a typical progression of dance training:

- Parents take their children to local dance schools where they choose from several idioms of dance technique.
- The most serious students may advance to training at a conservatory-type program, or program associated with a dance company, with hopes of dancing professionally.
- Students who continue to train in private studios may eventually find professional dance employment, including jobs in casinos, on cruise ships, in theme parks, or as dance educators.
- Still another group of dancers may opt to study dance at the college or university level (p.45).

The first step of this progression, dance education offered through community-based dance schools is what this research aims to describe and understand. For the purpose of this research, I limit my focus to community-based dance for youth, including ballet, jazz, tap, creative movement, modern, and hip-hop.

Community-Based Dance Education

In many states, dance is not part of the K-12 curriculum (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999). Instead, where most young dancers receive their initial training is in private studios (Kerr-Berry, 2003). The Research in Dance Education Priorities (RDPE) report defines private studios as "private/class dance instruction which may range from career-track professional

preparation programs to local studios/schools of dance and recreation/community centers; such programs may be sponsored by or housed in college or university facilities but the emphasis is on dance instruction and not academics” (National Dance Education Organization, 2004, p.108). In lieu of the term “private dance studio” I use the term “community-based dance education” because I feel it more accurately represents the range of programs in which dance education may be found.

In this section, I present a historical overview of community-based dance education and explore some current trends and issues in community-based dance education, including teacher certification and training, curriculum, and pedagogy.

Historical Overview

In the late 1700’s, the first community-based dance educators in the United States were hired to prepare young men and women for society. Charged with teaching social graces and social dances, these migrant dance masters went from community to community teaching dances that they created themselves or had learned from other teachers (Posey, 2002, p.43). Schools of dance developed in the 1800’s and were primarily owned by former professional dancers. But dance schools did not yet play a significant role in American culture. In fact Hagood (2000) notes that, “until the last decades of the 19th century dance in America was generally not thought of as an appropriate activity outside strictly controlled social settings” (p.15). Dance education gained popularity in the early 1900’s as neighborhood schools of dance taught the styles that were seen in motion pictures - tap, acrobatics, ballet, ethnic dance, and ballroom - to adults and children (Posey, 2002, p.44). By the 1950’s three distinct types of dance schools emerged: the ballet academy, the local “recital school,” and schools of modern dance (Posey, 2002, p. 44). Since the mid 20th century,

dance education has exploded in its scope and numbers; Posey estimates that in the decade from 1992-2002, the number of community-based dance schools has doubled (p. 47). She also notes:

Community schools of dance serve ...students well by offering good training in a variety of styles of dance at reasonable prices. At this entry point, parents are not concerned with the training required to become a professional dancer or a dance educator. They are interested in finding the best dance schools for their child (p. 47).

As community-based dance programs have grown and evolved, common themes and issues have emerged. In the following sections I will address some of the issues that have been related to community-based dance education: teacher training and certification (Gilbert, 2005; Posey, 2002; Rogoski, 2007), and curriculum and pedagogical method (Callahan-Russell, 2004; Werbrouck, 2004; Gilbert, 2005).

Teacher Training and Certification

Posey (2002) describes the most common way that community-based dance educators become teachers. Typically, dance educators begin their career as students and performers of dance. At some point, a dancer may decide that teaching experience could lead to increased job opportunities, and might become a teacher in a dance program. Many dance educators come into the field with little more than their own experience as a *dancer* to guide his or her teaching (p.45). Gilbert (2005) believes that properly trained dance specialists should teach dance, and many in the field agree. However, proper training can be difficult and expensive to achieve. Few universities or colleges have dance teacher credential programs, and others offer dance credentials only through physical education departments (<http://www.cdeadance.org>).

Several options do exist for community-based dance educators who seek more formal training or credentials. The Registered Dance Educator (RDE) credential has been created and

promoted as the professional standard for dance educators working in community-based programs. Dance educators who wish to join the National Registry of Dance Educators (NRDE) must supply extensive information and documentation about their educational background, dance education, performance and teaching experience. Applications are reviewed by trained evaluators, each a dance educator themselves (<http://www.nrde.org/whatyouneed.html>). This credential provides access to resources and professional development that allow dance teachers to provide the highest quality training (<http://www.ndeo.org/national.asp>). The list of RDEs is small however; only 45 members are listed on the NRDE website. And while the RDE certification has the backing of the National Dance Education Organization and several prominent dance educators and scholars, this certification has not reached widespread popularity.

Some dance teachers opt for certification by independent training organizations, such as Dance Masters of America (www.dma-national.org). Dance Masters of America, Inc. (DMA) is an international organization of dance educators who have been certified by test to teach. The DMA website claims that the organization is “on the cutting edge of the newest and best teaching techniques and has had an enormous impact upon both the art and education of dance for more than a century” (www.dma-national.org). DMA offers an annual summer intensive Teachers Training Institute and with progressive levels of “mastery.” Educators who wish to achieve the Dance Masters certification typically attend four summers of classes and pass examinations in core subjects Tap, Jazz, and Ballet. DMA also offers educational resources such as a newsletter, conferences, and web links to other dance organizations.

Another resource that supports professional dance educators in community-based settings is the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO). NDEO supports the RDE credential,

provides teacher preparation and training guidelines, offers discounts on conferences, books and CDs, and supports educators with nuts and bolts items like insurance, credit card processing, and discounted printing (<http://ndeo.org/education.asp>). The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts also contributes to the growth and development of community-based programs (specifically nonprofit organizations) and their teachers by offering training institutes that “develop professional skills and competencies in individuals” among their services (<http://www.nationalguild.org/programs.htm>). Finally, Anne Green Gilbert (2005) notes that there are a number of much smaller organizations and community-based dance programs that offer excellent in-service courses for dance specialists, among them Creative Dance Center (www.creativedance.org), Language of Dance Center (www.lodc.org), and Dance Education Laboratory (www.92y.org/del/).

Community-based dance programs also create their own training programs and professional development opportunities. Some examples are cited in the literature; Debbie Werbrouck (2004), a dance school owner, hosts visiting professionals and offers financial support for faculty to attend professional development conferences (p. 67). Tori Rogoski (2007), a RDE and owner/teacher of a Midwest dance school, established a mandatory teacher-training schedule prior to the start of her season for her instructors. Ultimately, since community-based dance programs take place in diverse settings and with teachers of varied backgrounds and with varied opportunities, finding common ground on teacher training and certifications is a challenge.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

What is taught and how it is taught is another issue in community-based dance schools. According to Posey (2002), dance curriculum in the private sector is in part, dictated by the market.

While some community-based dance schools operate under a nonprofit model and seek donations to support operating expenses, others rely solely on tuition income. In order to meet operating expenses, a community-based dance program must offer classes that appeal to parents and students alike. Gilbert (2005) explains, “because I have directed a private studio for 25 years, I am well aware that the students’ attitudes towards dance are what keep the studio thriving. If students of any age feel safe, happy, and engaged they tell their parents they want to keep dancing” (p.33). Werbrouck (2004) offers that community-based dance programs must balance the following needs in establishing curriculum:

- The students physical and educational development, balanced with the need to keep class fun and engaging
- The parents’ desire to “see results” from the dance training
- An end result or product (p.66)

Beyond addressing these basic needs, dance educators can approach pedagogy in many different ways. Gilbert (2005) argues for a conceptual approach over a “steps-only approach,” citing that research and best practices in education have advocated moving away from receiving knowledge and replicating it (or learning choreography and repeating it) as the sole method of learning (p. 34). Callahan-Russell (2004) notes that Laban-Bartenieff work, grounded in movement analysis, creates “integrated luscious dancers with brains to match” (p.135). Still others integrate a “whole child” approach and/or academic concepts (Werbrouck, 2004), or incorporate technology such as video or multimedia (Posey, 2002).

Considering curriculum and pedagogy in community-based dance programs becomes more complex when you consider that each style of dance, for instance ballet or modern dance, has many

different curriculum and syllabi. Ballet traditions such as Vaganova Ballet Academy, Royal Academy of Dancing, or the School of American Ballet each have their own progressive training, vocabulary, and signature styles. Similarly, modern dance instruction draws from technique codified by dance masters including Graham, Limon, Cunningham, and Horton. Defining a set curriculum or pedagogy for community-based dance education programs would be challenging; the field remains dynamic in its diversity (Hanna, J.L., 1999).

In conclusion, community-based dance education, while a relatively new field, has begun to explore some shared issues. The prominent themes that have emerged in the literature are related to teacher training, certifications, curriculum, and pedagogy. While certainly not an exhaustive summary of the field's issues and discussions, they provide a good entry point for exploring dance education in Eugene.

Community Arts and Out-of-School Time

To ground my study of community-based dance organizations in the larger context of community arts, I examined literature with an emphasis on community youth arts and out-of-school time. The origins of today's community youth arts movement can be traced to the late nineteenth century arts programs that were provided by urban settlement houses and neighborhood centers (http://www.nationalguild.org/about_schools.htm). The Settlement Houses, the most famous of which was Jane Addams' Hull House, integrated new immigrants into "common culture" with education, community service, and recreation (Adams & Goldbard, 2001). Today's community arts organizations may be located within Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs, grassroots organizations, performing and cultural arts centers and museums. They offer effective learning environments that help youth grow and maintain self-esteem, succeed academically, and plan and work for a "positive

future for themselves and their communities” (Heath, Soep, & Roach, 1998, p.2). Community-based youth arts organizations work to fill the “institutional gap” by complementing and activating the learning provided by schools and families. They create space where supplies, instruction, and structured exploration converge to produce young people able to create, view, and evaluate the arts (Fiske, 1999, p.33).

Of course, not all community-based organizations are created equal. Heath, Soep and Roach’s 1998 study examined a number of community-based youth organizations that worked with young people in the arts. They found that these highly effective organizations shared several characteristics:

- All were committed to community service, often partnering with other organizations or agencies
- Their organizational goals were centered around excellence in performance or production with community youth support
- They create an ethos of Respect, Responsibility, and Relevance with children and young people
- They foster the three C’s – Community, Connection and Commitment
- They provide opportunities for risk taking within a safe space (p. 11-13).

Heath et al (1998) argue that risk-taking, a key element of the arts, is the most important characteristic of all; when youth take risks in safe, supportive environments, the rewards and benefits they experience are all the more great. In addition, schools and youth organizations have indicated that another important factor in the success of their programs is the relationship between participants and the adults who work with them. By connecting youth with practicing artists and

professionals from arts organizations, young people gain substantial learning with adults and older youth who serve as teachers and mentors (Fiske, 1999).

Recent literature (Wallace Foundation, 2005; National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST), 2006; NIOST 2007) has articulated some important benefits of out-of-school time (OST). As this field emerges, there is a “heightened expectation that time well-spent outside of the school will pay off for kids in school and over a lifetime” (The Wallace Foundation, 2005, p.1). Quality out-of-school programs can have strong positive effects on children’s academic, social, and emotional lives (NIOST, 2006). Shirley Brice Heath (in Schwartzman, 2002) states that arts programs in particular lead to youth with vital social skills as they “literally ‘cast’ themselves as professionals and adults” (¶5). While much OST research has centered on “at-risk” youth, the current out-of-school-time movement “resituates community youth arts as an effective tool to help address problems that youth and communities today face” (Hager, 2008).

Further out-of-school time literature reflects programs affiliated with academic achievement programs, for example, the US Department of Education’s 21st Century Community Learning Centers. These programs, typically serving low-income or underachieving populations, combine academic work with enrichment activities during non-school hours (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>). Researchers have found that enrichment activity including the arts contributes to the development of cognitive, social and personal competencies. Arts programs increase academic achievement, help decrease youth involvement in delinquent behavior and improve youth attitudes about themselves and the future (Fiske, 1999).

Reviewing community arts and OST literature is instructive to my research as it brings up larger issues of arts and their place in community. However, a good deal of this literature focuses on

“at risk” youth or programs affiliated with academic achievement programs (Heath, 1999; Farnum & Schaffer, 1998). While I acknowledge the importance of such research, it falls outside of the scope of this study. In the next section, I will summarize some important research in dance education, with particular emphasis on defining, creating access to, and advocating for the field.

Dance Education

Dance educators and administrators have contributed to a growing body of research about dance education in K-12 settings (Dunkin, 2004; Risner, 2007), in higher education (Warburton, 2006), and in private studios, or community schools of dance (Cohen & Posey, 2002; Posey, 2002; Kerr-Berry, 2003; Werbrouck, 2004). While my research focuses on community-based dance education, the literature on dance in K-12 or higher education settings helps to frame the study in the larger context of the field of dance education. In the subsequent sections, I will discuss some issues that surfaced in the literature on dance education: defining dance education, positioning and advocating for dance education, and providing access to dance education.

Defining Dance Education

There is little agreement about what constitutes dance education, particularly in K-12 schools, and even less so for community-based programs. Brenda Pugh McCutchen, in her 2006 book *Teaching Dance as an Art in Education*, states that, “dance education is a general term to describe all situations in which one person teaches dance to another” (p. 5). Dance education might take the form of creative movement experiences, classical technique training, or participation in dance team or cheerleading squad. Dance education may have different goals or priorities, depending on the setting in which it is taught. For example, dance taught in schools may provide generalized instruction to large numbers of students, in many styles of dance, across cultures, while

following state and national accountability standards that dictate learning outcomes. On the other hand, community-based programs housed in privately owned studios provide specialized training in particular styles of dance to smaller, select groups of students, and often culminate with performance (McCutchen, 2006, p.7). Koff (2000) elaborates that a difference exists between dance *education* and dance *training*. She says:

The foundation of both dance education and dance training is in learning about the body and how it can move. From that point, dance training narrows into learning codified steps and motions, while dance education continues the exploration of body parts and movement in sequence with self, others, and the environment, through variations of time, space, and energy. These elements of dance are best explored and experienced in a creative and student-centered fashion, without imposition of style or codified forms (p.2).

With so many dance educators offering differing definitions and descriptions of dance education, it is hard to know what kinds of movement or activities fall into the category of dance education.

Perhaps one reason why dance has not been clearly defined is its relative newness in the K-12 and higher education worlds. Unlike other fine arts (music, visual arts), dance only more recently emerged from physical education departments to become its own independent arts-based discipline (Bonbright, 2000). Dance education achieved a greater national presence in the early 1990's with the formation of national standards in dance education (Bonbright, 1999). The Goals 2000: Educate America Act (1994) was instrumental in informing dance policy and initiatives, identifying what students should know and be able to do at grades four, eight, and twelve. The standards, however, fail to accurately define the field of dance education.

Positioning Dance Education

In addition to accurately defining the field of dance education, educators and administrators must also be able to describe the value of their field. A frequent topic of discussion and debate in

dance education is the articulation of the benefit of dance in instrumental versus intrinsic terms (Hetland & Winner, 2001; Bradley, 2001; Hagood, 2001; Hanna, 2001; Hanna, 2004; Giguere, 2006). The 2001 *Reviewing Education and the Arts Project (REAP) Report* described the benefits of the arts and academic achievement. Through meta-analysis of over 275 studies, dance was tentatively linked to improved nonverbal reasoning and visual-spatial skills (Hetland & Winner, 2001). Central to the authors' discussion of their results is a debate about the wisdom of justifying the arts by their "secondary utilitarian value," or their ability to increase math or reading ability (Hetland & Winner, 2001, p. 3). Hagood (2001) insists that until arts educators adequately build justifications on the intrinsic value of the arts, seeking links between dance and achievement in other subjects seems "both politically wise and necessary, at least for the foreseeable future" (p. 27). Hanna (2001 and 2004) emphasizes that the field of dance needs scholarly research into its instrumental benefits, and must assemble teams of expert researchers to describe the mental and academic skills that dance imparts. Unfortunately, the cognitive benefits and inherent value of dance education can be hard to assess. The 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress assessment of dance was unable to be completed because the numbers of dance programs in US schools was so low, that statistics could not be calculated (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999, p.1). According to Bradley (2001), until the value of dance education can be demonstrated, articulated, and disseminated widely, dance will continue to be "the most under-represented, most marginalized, most misunderstood field in all of education" (p. 35).

Recent research argues for an understanding of the ways the general public is served by the arts, and the roles the government could play in promoting these interests and benefits (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, & Brooks, 2004). Dance in particular creates strong social bonds between

people, is used to mark significant events or passages, and has evolved as a uniquely American art form that contributes to our collective national heritage (McCarthy et al., 2004, p. 50). Brinson (1991) notes that dance develops perceptual skills, provides opportunities for creative expression, offers insights into different cultural traditions, promotes sensitivity in working with others, develops self-confidence and self-esteem, encourages collaborative learning strategies, and develops strength, stamina, and flexibility (p. 161-163). Articulating the public and private benefits of dance helps provide a rationale for government policy, both in funding dance making, and in funding dance in public education (McCarthy et al., 2004, p.116).

Access to Dance Education

The lack of access to frequent, in-school dance education is perhaps the most serious issue that the field faces. The 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress¹ assessment of arts education in the United States found that in 80% of eighth-grade classes, the subject of dance is not taught (National Center for Education Statistics, 1998). Only 3% of eighth graders received dance instruction 3-4 times per week, 4% were taught dance 1-2 times per week, and 13% received instruction less than 1 time per week (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999, p.1). With regard to dance, the NAEP Arts Framework expects that students will experience the “joy of creating and the self-confidence that comes from the development of (dance) skills and performance” (National Center for Education Statistics, 1998, p. 2). Despite the fact that the NAEP has articulated goals for dance knowledge and skills, the program’s assessment of dance education in public schools has proved difficult. Results of the 1995 field test in dance indicated that too few schools offered dance instruction at grade 8 to obtain a nationally representative sample of dance-

¹ The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) conducts national and continuing assessment of what America’s students know and can do in various subject areas. While NAEP most recently assessed the arts in 2008, results will not be published until Spring 2009 (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/arts>).

educated students. Because a student sample of sufficient size and distribution could not be located, the grade 8 dance assessment was not administered (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/arts/whotook.asp>). In addition to this profound challenge, dance programming lacks the consistency of a nationwide curriculum. It is taught by educators of varying levels of skill, certification, and experience, and may be offered as physical education, as a fine arts experience, or as a teacher-led exploration (Bonbright, 1999).

In higher education institutions, arts instruction has dramatically decreased in the past decade, despite increased interest in majoring in the visual and performing arts (Warburton, 2006). Higher education institutions are critical centers for cultural activity, research, and policy advocacy. In a study on access to art in higher education, Warburton (2006) found that art faculty produce more creative work and spend more time in the classroom than all other program faculty (p.14). Dunkin (2004) also notes the impact that higher education institutions have on training future dance educators. Despite these important roles, economically pressured colleges and universities frequently make budget cuts that negatively impact arts programs, and in particular, dance programs (Warburton, 2006).

As we note these important issues in dance education, defining, positioning, and creating access to dance education, it becomes clear that community-based dance education programs exist within a complex field with many issues and concerns to navigate. In the next section, I will explore some of the ways policies at the federal, state or local level impact the field of dance education.

Policy Issues in Dance

Dance education exists within an environment where policy decisions on the federal, state, and local levels have impact on the field. I will examine some of these policy issues, beginning with

federal K-12 arts education policies and the role of the National Endowment for the Arts, and followed by an examination of Oregon's arts education standards and the Oregon Arts Commission, and the City of Eugene's Cultural Services division, including the recent Cultural Policy Review.

Federal Policies

In the United States, the federal government provides support for dance in several ways. One example is offering the benefits of nonprofit status (tax deductible donations, income tax exemption, and reduced rate postage, for instance) to dance organizations and dance companies. Another is through funds directed through state or local arts agencies for dance-related projects. A third way is through the federal agency, the National Endowment for the Arts.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has been a source of federal support for the arts for over forty years, and perhaps is the instrument of cultural policy with which Americans are most familiar. The Endowment's stated mission is "to support excellence in the arts, both new and established; bring the arts to all Americans; and provide leadership in arts education" (<http://www.nea.gov/about/Strategic/contents.html>). In September 1965, Congress and President Lyndon B. Johnson signed legislation establishing the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts. The involvement of the "committed and articulate dance advocate ... Agnes de Mille was both a catalyst and an accelerant for the Endowment's involvement in dance" (Graham, 1996, p.155). With the inception of the NEA, professional dance companies and artists were afforded expanded opportunities to perform locally and tour nationally and internationally; in 1966 the Martha Graham Dance Company received funding to make its first national tour in 15 years, and a grant to the Joffrey Ballet was also given (NEA, 2000, p.12). In 1968, a separate NEA program for dance was instituted. Under the NEA Dance Program, American concert dance received a significant and

timely infusion of support, entering the art form into a time of prolific creation (Graham, 1996, p. iv). Significant growth in the number of dance companies occurred in the 1980's – early 1990's, with a new focus on ethnic dance, an increase in dance training opportunities in United States universities, and the proliferation of dance across the country (Smith, 2003, p.2). By the mid- to late-90's however, dance companies experienced economic hardship and a drastic reduction of NEA funding, the end of the so called “dance boom” as NEA appropriations decreased to the levels they had been at the start of the decade (Martin, 1998, p.93). In the fiscal year 2006, the NEA supported all arts disciplines, including dance, with more than \$100 million over 2,200 grants (NEA, January 2007, p. 1). The 2009 grant awards in the category American Masterpieces: Dance grants range from \$10,000 to \$95,000 and support nationally and internationally recognized professional dance artists and organizations (<http://www.nea.gov/grants/recent/disciplines/Dance>).

The NEA's role in funding dance goes beyond directly awarding grants. The 2003 NEA study *Raising the Barre* discusses the role of the NEA in “channeling” contributions from other sources such as individuals, businesses and foundations (p.13). The study finds that for every \$1 in NEA grant funding, another \$3.50 is leveraged from other sources (NEA, 2003, p. 13). More recent NEA publications claim that an NEA award leverages up to \$8 per dollar of support (NEA, January 2007).

Historically, the NEA's primary dance education initiative was one of broadening American dance audiences. Federal subsidy helped bring high-quality dance to people living in all areas of the country. NEA touring programs designed to “enlarge and develop discerning audiences to enjoy, learn from, and support the arts created access to live dance nationwide (Yesselman, 1993, p. 8-9). Today, the NEA vision is a “nation in which artistic excellence is celebrated, supported, and

available to all” (<http://www.nea.gov/about/Strategic/contents.html>). The NEA further affirms its commitment to arts education in its strategic plan:

Arts education is a primary concern of the Arts Endowment, and the increasing financial and curricular pressures on public schools and after-school programs have brought a new urgency to the field. Through *Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth*, the Arts Endowment raises the quality and availability of arts education for our young citizens. Projects engage skilled artists and qualified teachers to help students experience, study, or perform in different art disciplines. In accordance with the “No Child Left Behind Act,” projects must also assess student learning according to national, State, or local arts education standards (NEA Strategic Plan, 2006, p.5).

The agency “puts great emphasis” on arts education and believes that arts education is “necessary for a child reaching his or her full potential” (NEA Annual Report, 2006, p. 3).

Another way that the United States government influences dance education is through the K-12 school system. The arts were among the first disciplines to develop educational goals and standards as part of the Goals 2000 education reforms (Bonbright, 2000). A consortium of national arts education associations, in conjunction with the National Endowment for the Arts, focused on what every young American should know and be able to do in dance, music, theater and the visual arts (Bonbright, 2000, p.32). The National Dance Education Standards target goals for three grade groups: K-4 children to become literate in the language of dance and learn to use dance as a means of communication and self-expression; middle school students to develop social relationships and self-image through dance; and high school students to develop their ability to communicate non-verbally, and refine critical thinking skills (<http://www.aahperd.org/nda/>).

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 has also had a strong impact on arts education. NCLB is intended to hold schools accountable for student achievement, return control of education to local authorities, promote parent choices, and encourage instruction methods to be

based upon research (<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/overview/intro/4pillars/html>). NCLB lists the arts as one of ten “core academic subjects” of public education. However, NCLB only requires schools to report student achievement tests for reading and mathematics. Because the arts are not among the subjects being tested, the federal mandate has been blamed for reduced instructional time and learning opportunities in the arts (Center on Education Policy, 2008; Spohn, 2008).

State and Local Level Policies

On the state level, state standards for arts education also influence dance education. Oregon arts content standards are a framework for arts education in the K-12 system. Revised in October 2004, they are based on national standards in the arts, but unlike the national standards, are not discipline-specific. Currently, the State of Oregon requires that students take one credit in any one of the following: fine arts, applied arts, or second language courses. Beginning with the class of 2012, this requirement will be expanded to three credits in the arts, second language, or technical education (<http://www.ode.state.or.us>). However, dance is usually not offered in schools, and thus is not available for students wishing to dance for credit. A quick web search of Eugene, Oregon high schools revealed only one public high school that offered dance classes within the school day; this was a “small school” that had a Arts and Academics focus (<http://www.nehs.lane.edu/>).

A state resource that may help support and strengthen the arts and dance in Oregon is the Oregon Arts Commission. Established in 1967, the Oregon Arts Commission was founded to “foster the arts in Oregon and ensure their excellence” (<http://www.oregonartscommission.org/about/>). The Commission, which receives funding from the state of Oregon, the NEA, and the Oregon Cultural Trust, provides grants in the areas of community development, education, and public art. It also provides the state’s many arts and

cultural organizations with a wide array of services, including access compliance and arts education resources, cultural planning and community-building assistance, advocacy resources, data files, and other resources.

On the local level, the City of Eugene's Cultural Services division offers arts and cultural programs that "enrich the cultural life of the region" (<http://www.eugene-or.gov>). Included in the City's arts and culture offerings are performing arts centers, concert and performing series, a public art program, a gallery, and a community art grant program (<http://www.eugene-or.gov>). The City of Eugene has recently adopted the slogan, "World's Greatest City of the Arts and Outdoors," and in support of this branding, underwent a year-long Cultural Policy Review beginning in June 2006. The Review examined the cultural sector and its condition, and through focus groups, interviews, community meetings, surveys, and cultural assessments, identified goals and strategies to strengthen the sector, and provided options to the City to help define its role in supporting Eugene's arts and culture (Wolf Brown, 2007). They found Eugene to foster grassroots cultural expressions that go well beyond what one would expect in a city of 150,000 people. Eugene has a mix of professional and amateur artists at all stages of their careers that produce work of all types in all disciplines and media, as well as a thriving assortment of events and festivals. The Cultural Policy Review also noted the abundant mix of professionally managed and volunteer-driven cultural organizations (including community arts organizations) that produce high quality art and grassroots cultural activity (Wolf Brown, 2007, p.15). Eugene's community-based dance programs exist within a strong network of arts organizations large and small. Dance offerings are numerous and are offered in diverse settings. A web search of "Eugene Dance Schools" yielded information on no fewer than fifteen dance schools. Further research revealed dance programs at the YMCA, in community

centers, fitness centers, and yoga studios. Adult dance classes are offered through Lane Community College and the University of Oregon, through the Eugene Folklore Society, ballroom dance studios (Staver Dance Sport, The Tango Center) and with private instructors in their home studios (Eugene Modern Dance, Moving Within). Offerings specifically for youth are plentiful, ranging from ballet conservatory programs (Eugene Ballet Academy, Ballet Fantastique) to private studio performance-based programs (The Dance Factory, All That!) to dance classes for babies and toddlers and their caregivers (Sparkplug Dance).

To better understand community-based dance programs in Eugene, Oregon, I purposively selected four case study sites that offer dance classes for youth in ballet, jazz, tap, hip-hop, and/or creative movement. I conducted in person interviews and analyzed documents of four organizations: Ballet Fantastique, Sparkplug Dance, On Your Toes School of Dance, and the Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center. In the following chapter I will summarize my findings of the organizations' structure, goals, programs, personnel, and partnerships.

Chapter Three: Data Collection and Findings

Introduction

A review of literature provides an initial framework for describing and understanding community-based dance education. Community programs, while distinct from academic programs, nonetheless share many common issues, including defining the field (i.e. what is dance education and what is taught), creating access to dance education, training and/or hiring qualified teachers, and advocating for the field as a whole. Community-based dance programs for youth often act as an entry point for dance education and training. In this research I ask the question, *What is a framework for describing and understanding community-based dance programs in Eugene, Oregon?* To more fully understand my research question, I purposely selected four dance programs as case study sites. In Eugene, community-based dance opportunities for youth are diverse and abundant. To represent the range of types of community-based programs, I selected two nonprofit organizations, Ballet Fantastique and Sparkplug Dance; one privately owned studio, On Your Toes School of Dance; and one parks and recreation program, held at Amazon Community Center. For each organization, I conducted a personal interview with the owner, founder, or administrator, and analyzed the organizations' internal and external documents (websites, brochures, strategic plans, etc.) to the extent that they were available. In the following sections I summarize my research of these four programs. The findings are separated by case study site, and then organized by the sub-headings of organizational structure, programs, goals, personnel, and partnerships and community engagement.

Ballet Fantastique

Ballet Fantastique is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization that “keeps classical ballet vibrantly alive through unique, community-centered, world class training, educational and performance experiences for artists, audiences, and professionals” (<http://www.balletfantastique.org/index.html>). Ballet Fantastique was founded in 2001 as a professional training academy to meet the needs of high caliber dance training in the Russian Vaganova Method² (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). Ballet Fantastique offers small class sizes (maximum of 5 students in most classes), extensive performing opportunities, and age-appropriate classes in a state of the art facility in downtown Eugene (<http://www.balletfantastique.org/academy/difference.php>). After researching Ballet Fantastique online, I contacted Executive Director, Hannah Bontrager. According to the organization’s website (www.balletfantastique.org), Bontrager has extensive ballet training in the Vaganova technique, as well as degrees in Dance and English Literature and a minor in Community Arts from the University of Oregon. Her honors thesis explored dance education under the No Child Left Behind Act and situated dance education and integrated arts education within a national context. Bontrager currently telecommutes from Washington DC, where she dances with a professional ballet theatre company. Since meeting with Bontrager for an in person interview was not possible, I conducted email and phone interviews with her, and also analyzed the organization’s internal and public documents (i.e. strategic plan, brochure, website). The results of my interview and document analysis are discussed below.

² Originally developed by Mme. Agrippina Vaganova over one hundred years ago, the Vaganova method fused French, Russian, and Italian ballet techniques. This codified approach emphasizes the simultaneous development of both technical proficiency and individual artistry (http://www.balletfantastique.org/academy/info_for_parents/vaganova_syllabus.htm).

Figure 1.
At-A-Glance: Ballet Fantastique

Founded	In 2000 by Donna Marisa Bontrager and Hannah Bontrager
Programs	<p>Ballet Fantastique offers classes through its Academy, participates in school residencies, and performs with its professional Chamber Company.</p> <p>The Academy is divided into a Professional Division and a Children’s Division. The Professional Division offers three different levels – Accelerated Beginning (Technique and Variations), Intermediate (Technique, Point, and Variations), and Intermediate-Advanced (Technique, Point, and Intensive Variations). Children’s Division – Classes for 4- 8 year olds: “Twinkling Stars,” and “Shooting Stars.”</p> <p>Also, Ballet Fantastique offers Summer Dreamworks – Fairytale Dance Camps for ages 4-8, and Coaching Intensives for ages 9 and up.</p>
Ages	<p>Professional division classes are for students 9 and up.</p> <p>Children’s Division classes are for students aged 4-8.</p>
Enrollment	25-30 students in the Academy.
Cost	<p>Professional Division ranges from \$175/month to \$264/month, with an average cost of approximately \$8 per instructional hour.</p> <p>Children’s Division \$48 per month (approximately \$16 per instructional hour).</p>

Organizational Structure

Ballet Fantastique’s small size offers an intimate experience to its dancers and audiences. This intimacy is reflected in its organizational structure. The organization is headed by mother-daughter team Artistic Director Donna Marisa Bontrager and Executive Director Hannah Bontrager. Additional unpaid and paid staff includes two Children’s Division Instructors, and a costume designer, among others (<http://www.balletfantastique.org/inside/board.php>). For a small organization, Ballet Fantastique has significant volunteer involvement. Dancers and their families sign performance agreements that require a certain number of hours of volunteer work such as putting up posters or selling program advertisements. In addition, the organization has a volunteer

secretary, grant writer, assistant rehearsal director, publicity coordinator, photographers, webmaster, and several student interns per year.

As a nonprofit organization, a Board of Directors also supports Ballet Fantastique. “Our nonprofit board is currently quite small. Many of the members “work” for BFan... all participate in fundraising to the extent that they’re able, and all are increasingly involved in more long-range strategic planning” (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). The organization would like to increase the size and strength of its Board of Directors and has published a brochure to inform and recruit prospective board members. According to the document, Ballet Fantastique’s board members contribute a “rich array of talents, including artistic direction, public relations, financial management, and development guidance” (Ballet Fantastique Board of Directors, Author, n.d.). Board members are asked to serve on committees that include Business/Bookkeeping, Planning/Steering, and Development Strategies, among others. The brochure offers interested parties an opportunity to learn more about “Ballet Fantastique’s remarkable work and how you can get involved” (Ballet Fantastique Board of Directors, Author, n.d.).

Ballet Fantastique, like many other nonprofit organizations, relies on diverse funding streams to support operations. Ballet Fantastique’s funding includes Academy tuition, performance fees and ticket sales, grants, individual and corporate donations, and fundraising. According to Bontrager, donations and grants aren’t as significant a portion of Ballet Fantastique’s income as they would like; “Tuition and fees and ticket sales support day-to-day operations, but donations and grants are integral to helping us achieve parts of our nonprofit mission, such as outreach and awarding dancer scholarships” (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). An increase in contributed income will also help the organization support its professional Chamber Company

dancers and staff with competitive salaries and stipends. Furthermore, Ballet Fantastique solicits funds in an annual direct-mail campaign and produces an annual gala fundraiser. The organization “continues to develop strategies to develop and build ongoing relationships with donors as a means of ‘reminding’ them how much of an impact their investment in us has, and how far we stretch every dollar in creating quality programming and reaching young artists and audiences” (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

Programs

The Ballet Fantastique Academy offers different levels of opportunities for dance training; a Children’s Division (ages 4-8), Professional Division (ages 9-Pro) and a summer camp program (ages 4 and up) (<http://www.balletfantastique.org/academy/academy.php>). Class offerings are determined by the training needs of the students:

When we have three or more young students ... who are ready and interested in starting to train more intensively, we will try to recruit the additional students needed to start a new Introduction to Classical Ballet class. Often we will start the class anyway and hope to build enrolment as the school year continues. We will always offer between two and three classes in our Children’s Division (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

A recent survey of enrolled students listed reasons for enrolling in Ballet Fantastique’s Academy classes: 99% enjoyed the small class sizes, 97% the stellar faculty, 96% the professional performance opportunities, and 94% chose Ballet Fantastique because of its reputation (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

Professional level classes increase in frequency and intensity as the dancer moves up from beginning to intermediate-advanced levels. Technique and variations classes are taught, along with pointe for older students (http://www.balletfantastique.org/academy/pro_classes.php). For the most advanced dancers, the academy offers a professional dancer development program, master classes,

and a professional chamber performance ensemble. The chamber company is one of the aspects of Ballet Fantastique that sets it apart from other local ballet studios.

Our professional chamber ballet company gives young Northwest dancers professional development experience (not only in dancing, but also in arts education programming, performance planning, choreography, soloist experience, etc.). Instead of sending our gifted young dancers to San Francisco or New York, we wanted to offer them the opportunity to cultivate and build their professional portfolios *here*, where they can simultaneously give back and enrich the cultural climate of communities in the Northwest (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

The chamber company is made up of mostly Northwest professional dancers, many of whom simultaneously attend school at either the University of Oregon or Lane Community College. A unique element to the company is that it trains its dancers as dance educators, increasing both the dancers' marketability as dance professionals, and also increasing Ballet Fantastique's ability to provide educational opportunities in the Eugene community (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

Personnel

Ballet Fantastique trains its dance students in the Russian Vaganova technique, following the eight levels of the internationally renowned syllabus. The Academy employs three instructors – Artistic Director Donna Marisa Bontrager, Lead Instructor Hannah Bontrager, and Rising Stars and Introduction to Classical Ballet instructor Naomi Todd. According to the organization's website, each instructor has extensive training in classical ballet, as well as performance credentials and experience with the Vaganova pedagogy (<http://www.balletfantastique.org/academy/meet.php>). Training and professional development is offered by Ballet Fantastique on site to train and mentor new teachers. The training includes gradually immersing the teachers in teaching experiences that

follow the Ballet Fantastique syllabus, while participating in regular observations and feedback. New teachers receive more responsibility as their experience grows.

Ballet Fantastique has also developed a unique program entitled Project DanceREACH to train its company dancers as dance educators. Bontrager says, “the training will increase their marketability as dance professionals, even as it increases our capacity to meet local needs for quality dance education programming” (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). In fact, Ballet Fantastique writes a commitment to dance education into the Chamber Company members’ contracts, and includes “training and mentorship in conceiving and implementing arts education programming” as part of their experience (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

Goals

Ballet Fantastique has articulated its short and long term goals in the form of a strategic plan for 2007-2013. Bontrager summarizes some of the organization’s ambitious goals:

Our short-and long-range goals are to continue to grow in a way that is both sustainable and also in keeping with our mission. We want to grow our administrative staff, dancer roster, Northwest arts presence, donor and audience base, board of directors and presence. Of course, we also hope to grow our budget as a means of increasing our capacity to award scholarships, pay our professional dancers and staff competitively, and produce an annual concert season of four major productions/year (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

The highlights of the strategic plan include programming and capacity building in the areas of board development and recruitment, public relations, artistic/dancer relations, fundraising and development, planning, and bookkeeping. Specific long term goals include expanding staff,

recruiting more students, increasing the size of the company, expanding outreach opportunities, and raising funds (Ballet Fantastique Strategic Planning 2007-2013, Author, n.d.).

Partnerships and Community Engagement

Ballet Fantastique's commitment to community engagement and dance education is emphasized in the organization's mission and echoed throughout its communications. Outreach programs were initiated as "a means of meeting another serious dearth in our community's arts offerings: in-school and in-theater dance education" (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). The company regularly goes into public schools as part of its EXPERIENCE DANCE! Project to produce assemblies and residencies. "Currently there are only two Eugene dance educators that I am aware of who are working with teachers and school kids to bring dance into the classroom: myself and Rachael Carnes... of Sparkplug Dance" (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). Ballet Fantastique targets local public elementary and middle schools with few in-school arts programs; in particular the organization prioritizes Title I schools serving high populations of low income students in their outreach (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

Ballet Fantastique views itself as "on the cutting edge of evolving the kinds of outreach programs that dance organizations offer" and plans to web-publish their results and processes as best practice models for other dance companies and organizations world-wide (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). Such willingness to share resources parallels the organization's approach to partnerships. Ballet Fantastique partners with dozens of arts organizations, artists, and schools each year, with collaborators ranging from dance groups (Traduza Dance, Umpqua Modern Dance Project), to symphonies (Oregon Mozart Players, Eugene Symphony), schools (Harris

Elementary, Crow Public Schools), and wineries (Territorial Winery), to name a few (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

Ballet Fantastique believes that collaboration is key to *any* organization's continued growth and that it keeps dance interesting and relevant to audiences (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). A recent review of a Ballet Fantastique performance demonstrates that such collaborations are indeed interesting to audience members. The Register Guard's Gwen Curran reviewed Ballet Fantastique's February 2009 performance at the Hult Center for the Performing Arts. Curran applauded the evening of dance, saying, "Artistic Director Donna Marisa Bontrager should be very proud of her Ballet Fantastique for performing exquisitely" and urges readers, "Do not miss Ballet Fantastique's next concert. Well done" (Curran, G., February 11, 2009).

Ballet Fantastique is proving to have both a versatile and talented Chamber Company performing group as well as a high caliber ballet training academy. Although some may think of professional ballet training academies as elitist institutions, Ballet Fantastique has a commitment to sharing dance with the community and making ballet more accessible. Through outreach, partnerships, and training of its dancers as educators, Ballet Fantastique is expanding the network of dance education in the Eugene community.

Sparkplug Dance

Founded in 2004 by Rachael Carnes, Sparkplug Dance Educational Resources is a 501(c) 3 organization whose mission is to help “communities to unite in their vision and vigor to build the arts and physical activity into every child’s education (<http://www.sparkplugdance.org/>). Since its inception, Sparkplug Dance has grown from simply offering classes for children to an organization that is facilitating a new way of teaching by “encouraging teachers and administrators to embrace meaningful movement, physical activity, and the arts in their curriculum” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). With an emphasis on a “whole person, developmental approach” to dance (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008), Sparkplug offers classes for babies, toddlers, young children and their parents at its studio, conducts teacher trainings through Lane Community College and in the community, and has an extensive outreach program that serves local schools and service agencies.

Because I have volunteered for Sparkplug Dance as an intern, and currently serve as the organization’s Administrative Director, access to information about the organization was readily available. In addition to reviewing the organization’s extensive website materials and other public and internal documents, I conducted an in-person, one hour interview with Rachael Carnes, founder of Sparkplug Dance. According to Sparkplug Dance’s website (www.sparkplugdance.org), Carnes has been teaching concept-based creative dance since 1996 and has been dancing all of her life. Carnes teaches Sparkplug’s studio classes in Creative Ballet, Tap, and Modern, and conducts workshops and teacher trainings for the early childhood and K-8 community. The results of my interview with Carnes and document analysis follow.

Figure 2.
At-A-Glance: Sparkplug Dance Educational Resources

Founded	In 2004 by Rachael Carnes. Sparkplug Dance is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization.
Programs	Studio Program includes core classes Neuro-Nurture Baby class, Toddler dance, Dance and Art, Creative Ballet, Creative Tap, Creative Modern. Teacher Trainings are offered through Lane Community College annually. Workshops and trainings are also offered in agencies and organizations throughout the community. Residencies are offered in Lane County public schools.
Ages	Studio program offers classes for babies and caregivers to 11 years. Workshops and trainings for teens to adults.
Enrollment	Average of 50-75 students per 10-week session.
Cost	\$85-\$125, sliding scale for 10-week studio classes. Scholarships are offered.

Organizational Structure

Sparkplug Dance Educational Resources is a young, small organization, whose paid staff consists of one part-time Administrative Director, and three paid instructors for the studio program. Sparkplug Dance was founded in September 2004, and became a 501(c) 3 organization in the same year. Founder Rachael Carnes is one of six board members, and also provides an advisory role in day-to-day operations as well as a trajectory towards the future (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). The board of directors meets monthly to discuss fiduciary matters, long range planning, and governance of the organization. Carnes's vision is that this local board will focus primarily on fundraising to support scholarships and financial aid for the studio program, and that a national advisory board will be convened to meet quarterly and "discuss curriculum, pedagogy, replication, best practices, etc" (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). The organization has a small volunteer base, namely a volunteer bookkeeper,

grant writer, and web master, but has not successfully targeted a large group of volunteers. Carnes hypothesizes that recruiting volunteers from its constituents (parents and children) is difficult because their participation in Sparkplug's programs is not consistent, "first they take a class, and then they won't" (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). Sparkplug has been more successful in soliciting volunteers for short-term, project based work. The organization is funded primarily by tuition from its studio classes, with additional support coming from individual and business donations, foundation grant support, and some municipal support (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Programs

Sparkplug Dance conducts three different kinds of programming: intergenerational studio classes, teacher trainings, and direct service in agencies or public outlets. The studio program is housed at the Washington Park Community Center and consists of a core program of six classes, serving students from newborn to eleven years of age. Studio classes are taught by Rachael Carnes and two other paid teachers, who have been trained by Carnes. Classes for the youngest dancers are designed for baby/toddler and caregivers and offer "fun and appropriate movements for building babies' bodies and brains" (www.sparkplugdance.org). In Dance and Art class (for 18 months to 4 ½ years), students explore a dance concept and a related art project, and three to five year olds choose between Creative Ballet and Creative Tap. The oldest students learn about modern dance technique, improvisation, and choreography in Intro to Modern Dance (ages 6-11). All classes are \$125 for a 10-week session, although a sliding scale of \$85-\$125 and partial scholarships are available (www.sparkplugdance.org).

Sparkplug's unique contribution to dance education in Eugene lies in its whole child, developmental approach that is brain compatible and brain based. By this, Carnes explains, it means that students "warm up to an idea, explore the idea, build some skill, combine knowledge and reflect upon the experience" (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). With its rather unique curriculum and pedagogy, Sparkplug's studio classes set an expectation that children "will be accountable and responsible for their own creativity from a very early age" (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). By engaging in the choreographic process and making choices about their work, children develop creativity and their own aesthetic tastes. Carnes adds, "learning to make choices in our own self develops core and it also allows them the skill of learning that other people may feel differently about the exact same thing, and rather than having that automatic resistance to difference, that they can be open to at least having an inquiry around it" (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

The lessons learned in Sparkplug's classes go beyond respecting choice and difference, and also lead children to "get to a place where they are making connections, they are finding links. They're really pushed a little bit to try something where it's not just about I'm receiving the learning, but I'm responsible for the learning" (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). Carnes adds that such an approach develops skills such as problem solving and linking concepts. Children are able to scaffold the knowledge that they have created and link it together with other lessons or activities in a valuable way. "The tools of abstraction, being able to pull back and reference...what a fundamental gift for education," Carnes says. "I didn't give them that gift - dance gave them that gift. What is more meaningful? What helps the world make sense more than that?" (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Another aspect of Sparkplug's dance education offerings is teacher trainings in the early childhood, K12, and higher education communities. Carnes leads these programs that "train teachers to use movement with a variety of populations and in many settings" (<http://sparkplugdance.org/teacher-training/>). In early 2009, Sparkplug received a \$10,000 grant from the Phileo Foundation (Portland, Oregon) to lead free workshops and trainings for the community in the coming year. These "curricular, brain-based movement and creativity workshops" focus on prenatal, infant, toddler, PreK and early elementary education populations, and are available at no cost to staff members of agencies working with the early childhood education community (<http://www.sparkplugdance.org/workshops/>). Sparkplug also offers extensive resources on its website such as a *Teacher Resource Guide*, a downloadable .pdf publication, *Arts from the Inside Out: Dance Education in the Classroom*, and additional articles and answers to common questions (<http://sparkplugdance.org/information/>).

Finally, Sparkplug engages directly with caregivers and children in other venues in the community such as the Eugene Public Library, Birth To Three³, or Head Start. Often these opportunities are lead by Carnes and feature performance and workshop elements. "Then I'm working with actual community members who will probably never make it to our studio but are able to glean in that 20 or 30 minutes we spend together, maybe some ideas" (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Personnel

Rachael Carnes's path as a dance educator began as an interest in dance from a young age. As a student in Montessori education and then an arts-based public school in Eugene, Carnes was

³ Birth To Three is a private non-profit organization that provides parenting education and support to families with young children (http://www.birthto3.org/about_bt3.html).

fortunate to experience the arts “in every single grade, in every single day” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). Her classroom teachers, all professional artists as well as educators, created an environment where the arts were “just a part of your bread and butter” and for Carnes, “gave [her] an incredible richness in [her] educational life that allowed things to always be possible” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). After studying Dance Theatre at Reed College, Carnes lived in Seattle, where she saw a flier for training in concept-based creative dance at the Creative Dance Center (CDC). Carnes enrolled in the two-week training, taught by CDC founder Anne Green Gilbert, and says, “it was as if somebody just handed me every tool I’d ever need” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). Gilbert, a cornerstone in concept-based creative dance for over 40 years, inspired Carnes to do the work she does through Sparkplug, and remains a mentor to this day; “she’s the person I’m on the phone to – not every day, not every month, but when I really need that directional support...And because we do the same stuff, she can picture what it is that I’m challenged by (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Two additional teachers work with Sparkplug’s studio program. Each new teacher undergoes significant training. First, prospective teachers enroll in a weeklong training course in the summer, offered through Lane Community College’s Dance department, and taught by Carnes. Next, teachers work alongside Carnes as an assistant teacher, team teaching for at least a term before working with their own class. Carnes emphasizes that this process allows new teachers to not only observe best practices, but also to learn how to navigate “when things go kapooey” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). For further support, each teacher works with the same set of tools and concepts. Each week, Sparkplug teachers introduce a new concept, for instance

space, pathways, energy, shapes; lesson plans are adapted for age-appropriateness, but are quite similar throughout the program, allowing for dialogue and sharing between teachers. Furthermore, Sparkplug's teachers improve their techniques through regular observation and evaluation by Carnes.

Finding teachers to work within Sparkplug's unique curriculum and pedagogy has not always been easy. Teachers have to be willing to prepare lessons that have a great deal of structure. Teaching Sparkplug classes requires more attention to movement and energy concepts and less of what most people would think of as formal dance training – choreography and “steps”. According to Carnes, “the people who have found the work of being a teacher the most rewarding are those folks who come at it not from dance, but from education” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). The other teachers in the studio program have education backgrounds; one is working on a degree in early childhood education, the other is a former elementary education teacher (www.sparkplugdance.org). Carnes notes that they both have “great energy; the parents respond really positively to both of them” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). In fact, Sparkplug's classes reach near capacity with very little marketing; “it is just word of mouth. But that's the reputation, and that's why, when you come into take a class, it better be good” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Goals

Sparkplug Dance is focused on some pretty practical short term goals; “just to persist in the given climate and with the challenges of keeping company in a community that does not have a tremendous amount of support for the arts” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). Carnes elaborates that the organization wants to be able to continue to provide the same high quality services that people have grown accustomed to. When looking at the long-term goals of

the organization, however, the bar gets raised. Five, ten, fifteen years down the road, Carnes imagines that “ideally, there would be no need for Sparkplug Dance...it would be a planned obsolescence because the project has embedded itself successfully in the programs that need it most” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). Advocacy, policy-making, and programming must align to support absorption of Sparkplug’s ideals and methodologies into schools and service agencies. Ultimately, Sparkplug Dance could become “informational, and a place for resources and ideas and sharing” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Carnes spoke at length of the hindrances to reaching these long-term goals. Because Sparkplug Dance is working in a way that some might consider “in the fringe,” gathering the support of a research partner “someone in a lab coat or with a PhD” to “take interest in looking at this work meaningfully” is critical (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Carnes continues:

Although there’s been a lot of research, a glut of research into arts learning, there’s been precious little energy spent I think in defining arts learning as being something that could be on a spectrum of quality. I feel like the energy spent in trying to, you know, notice outcomes. Okay, yeah, kids that get music do better in math. Kids who have access to drama do better in their English classes. I mean I feel like most of these studies could just be duh, duh, duh. But what we’re asking is a more, is a more involved question for most people, which is on a brain level, in our neurology, can we note that lack of movement patterning in infancy will actually affect change later on? (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

In her work, Carnes has noted that although many early childhood educators, schoolteachers, and administrators respond positively to her methods, “it runs perpendicular to everything that’s happening in education right now. It runs against No Child Left Behind, it runs against cutbacks to PE and music. It just doesn’t work in the system” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Partnerships and Community Engagement

Out of Sparkplug Dance's commitment to creating access to dance education comes a great deal of outreach in the community. Carnes regularly conducts workshops and trainings in service agencies and community gathering spaces such as the public library, many of which are free or low-cost. Carnes is also an oft-requested public speaker and has presented to the City Club of Eugene, the University of Oregon's Planning, Public Policy and Management Department, and to the Arts and Business Alliance of Eugene. Sparkplug's website lists an impressive roster of over 45 present and former community partners ranging from public schools (Astoria Public Schools, Brattain Elementary, Eugene School District 4J), to public agencies (Lane County Public Health, Head Start of Oregon), to nonprofit organizations (Relief Nursery of Cottage Grove, Boys and Girls Club of Emerald Valley) (<http://sparkplugdance.org/teacher-training/clients/>).

The Sparkplug website describes the work the organization is doing to strengthen arts offerings in local schools through partnerships and residencies. For example, in Winter 2008, Carnes received funding through the Lane Arts Council and the Eugene School District 4J to complete a six-week residency with K-2nd graders at Eugene's Edgewood Elementary School. Carnes met with students for 45 minutes once per week and each child received about five hours of direct instruction. Throughout this short time, Carnes used a developmental, integrative, and reflective approach to dance education. Her work with the students is summarized in their own words on the organization's website. When asked *What is Dance*, students responded with such thoughtful answers as, "Dance is about being yourself" and "We can sway and skate. Dance is fun. Dance is quiet" (<http://sparkplugdance.org/information/articles/edgewood-case-study/>). Edgewood School's teachers responded enthusiastically to Carnes' work, and appreciated the way she made dance

relevant and accessible. First grade teacher Julie Hulme says, “Rachael is an inspiration to all of us – children and adults alike.... I was impressed with Rachael’s knowledge of brain development and her ability to communicate complex research into easily understandable terms – receiving her detailed lesson plans each week enabled us to do follow-up activities with our classes” (<http://sparkplugdance.org/faq/#teachers>).

Despite the many successes of Sparkplug’s partnerships and programs, Carnes notes that the nature of her work brings challenges to building grassroots support for the organization:

It’s more challenging to have the genuine understanding and education and backbone locally because even people who serve on the board of directors, who have taken classes, who are invested in the organization, who are stewarding the organization still don’t necessarily get that the studio is just the tip of iceberg, right? That the big audacious goal that’s sitting underneath it is reflective of the big audacious problem over here that our children are actually suffering from our modernity, and that their neurological hardwiring is affected by our era of convenience (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Carnes works to create support for the organization’s mission, as well as for movement and dance education. She believes that “one day people will kind of wake up to the realization that dance is a fundamental piece of education” and hopes that in the future of dance education, “everybody has the opportunity to do meaningful movement, throughout their lives” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Sparkplug Dance is a unique organization that strives to bring movement and dance education into the lives of all young people. Working with a distinct curriculum and pedagogy, Sparkplug Dance moves beyond choreography and performance to embrace dance’s potential to impact social, emotional and cognitive intelligence, language literacy, and other types of learning. While Sparkplug boasts a strong studio program with classes for babies through 11 year olds, its complementary programming such as teacher training and residencies is perhaps even more

important to its mission and goals. In its short four years of existence, Sparkplug Dance has already created a strong presence in the dance and early childhood education communities in Eugene.

On Your Toes School of Dance

On Your Toes School of Dance has provided dance instruction in Eugene since 1985. A private studio owned by Cindy Zreliak, On Your Toes (OYT) offers classes for students ages 5 through teen and young adult at various levels of many disciplines of dance, including ballet, jazz, lyrical, and hip-hop. The studio philosophy is “to teach students the fundamental skills of dance rather than just a dance to perform” (www.oytdance.com). After researching On Your Toes online, I contacted founder and director Cindy Zreliak, who agreed to an hour-long, in-person interview. According to the school’s website (www.oytdance.com), Zreliak holds a BS in Dance from the University of Oregon, and has danced with several contemporary dance and jazz groups, as well as choreographed for competitive dance and dance companies. Following is a summary of my interview with Zreliak and document analysis.

Figure 3:
At-A-Glance: On Your Toes School of Dance

Founded	In 1985 by Cindy Zreliak
Programs	Classes offered in: Ballet/Tap/Jazz, Hip-Hop (Kids and Middle School), Center Stage, Ballet (10-12 yrs., Beginning, and Advanced), Lyrical Jazz (Beginning Intermediate and Advanced), Advanced Jazz and Hip-Hop, ZAPP Juniors, ZAPP Cadets, ZAPP Company Class, ZAPP Elites, ZAPP Graduates
Ages	5 and 6 year olds up to 24 -30 year olds in the ZAPP graduate class
Enrollment	Approximately 100 students
Cost	Prices range from \$35 per month for 1 class/week up to \$260 per month for 10 classes/week. Average \$7.50 per hour of instruction.

Organizational Structure

On Your Toes School of Dance emerged from a desire to provide “a quality dance education that people could afford” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). Cindy Zreliak has worn the same three job hats – director, instructor, and choreographer – since the studio opened in 1985. Zreliak began her teaching career after graduating with a BS in Dance from the University of Oregon. While working with Eugene’s Parks and Recreation dance programs and with the Creative Dance Institute in Eugene, she “got a lot of encouragement from the different programs that I should just start my own program” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). Zreliak took this advice, and slowly began growing her own program:

I started my own studio, and it grew enough that we could expand into Springfield, where I actually took over a studio from a friend who was retiring. I was able to then add teachers, and like I said before we got up to nine teachers, which was really wonderful. For the first five years it was just me, and then progressively for about the next ten, then we had up to nine teachers, and then it slowly dwindled down to just me again.

On Your Toes, at its greatest capacity, taught 300-500 students at two different locations – in Eugene and Springfield. For reasons that Zreliak cites as economic and competition (“there have been dance studios popping up on every corner the past few years”), current enrollment is closer to 100 students, and Zreliak operates only one studio in Eugene (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Zreliak currently is the sole instructor. Her daughter Ari is also involved with OYT, but is pursuing her own professional opportunities as well. Zreliak, an accomplished dancer, teacher and choreographer, feels less comfortable with the business end of running a studio; her husband does the company’s books. She notes that it is, “definitely important to have the business end. Even though this is the arts, you still have to pay the rent” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3,

2009). The studio does not seek out a significant amount of volunteer involvement. Zreliak quips, “I would say I’m pretty much it” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Organizationally, On Your Toes differs from Sparkplug Dance and Ballet Fantastique in that it is a privately owned studio and *not* a nonprofit organization. However, nonprofit status is a goal of Zreliak’s and is something she has pursued twice in the past. With predominantly volunteer legal help, she was unable to complete the process. When asked about the motivation to continue to pursue nonprofit status, Zreliak cited two important reasons. First, the process of creating a board of directors for previous nonprofit filing attempts made her aware of how a group of individuals working for the good of the studio could support her, and fuel her efforts. Her past boards were family members, friends, and parents of students who encouraged her to pursue out-of-the-box opportunities such as bringing her dancers out of the country for performance. Secondly, Zreliak feels that nonprofit status carries a real or implied prestige, which could open doors and create connections for her in Eugene (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Nonprofit status would also allow On Your Toes to accept tax-deductible donations. Currently, the studio receives some in-kind donations such as paper plates or cups for a recital, or a reduced rate on a performance hall rental. Zreliak also notes that her very first students have gone on to be “very successful” and occasionally one of them, or their families will send money to help out a needy student (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). The bulk of the studio’s funding comes from tuition income. Zreliak notes that tuition and fees can be a barrier to participation for some families:

The prices are just too high. And that’s not to say that the other studios are overcharging at all. Its just, that’s always been kind of one of my goals – to make sure I could offer a quality

dance education that people could afford. We have a lot of scholarships that get offered (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Zreliak tries not to turn anyone away for lack of money. She works with families and students to come up with a strategy that will enable them to dance. “I have kids who come into the studio to clean, or who sit at the front desk and answer questions” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). Zreliak points to the tuition price list on the wall and says, “the prices that you see here are not really the prices that everyone pays” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). Finally, performances in venues such as the Hult Center generate revenue and create a buzz about the studio and its programs.

Programs

On Your Toes School of Dance offers a wide range of classes for students aged 5 to young adult. On Your Toes specializes in a blend of classical and contemporary dance training that was not always available in Eugene:

There wasn't anybody really at the time that I first started that offered jazz and ... I started the first hip-hop class here. Nobody knew what hip-hop was and there was a lot of interest. It was all over television, MTV and everything, so there was interest in classes that weren't just ballet, tap, or jazz. And we're one of the only studios that have ever offered modern classes outside of Lane or the University (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Classes include a ballet/jazz/hip-hop sampler for the youngest students, and progressively advancing levels of hip-hop, ballet, lyrical jazz, and jazz/hip-hop. When asked how Zreliak chooses class offerings, she responded, “It's a crap shoot. You keep your ear to the ground, throw out new ideas, and see what works” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). When she began offering a class called “Center Stage,” featuring “production quality dance with special use of props” (http://on_your_toes.homestead.com/ClassDescriptions.html), a dance movie with the same title

was very popular. The class filled immediately, perhaps because of this association. Her programming has evolved to offer more hip-hop (“that’s what brings people in the door”), while cutting other programs (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). Despite her love for tap dance, Zreliak decided to eliminate it from her programming because the maintenance required to upkeep a tap floor was too expensive. Finally, OYT features several classes for the ZAPP Company dancers.

Zreliak Artistic Performing Productions, or ZAPP, is a performing group of students selected by audition. Directed by Zreliak and assisted by Arianna Zreliak, ZAPP was established 20 years ago. The group performs a wide variety of styles, from jazz and hip-hop to lyrical to swing. ZAPP boasts an impressive resume, with performances ranging from local charity events such as Dance for a Reason, to national and international performances in Anaheim, California, Orlando, Florida, Las Vegas, New York, and England (http://on_your_toes.homestead.com/ZAPPMain.html). Zreliak estimates that the ZAPP dancers do about 50 free performances a year in the community (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Personnel

Zreliak’s own dance training is an outstanding example of community-based dance education. Growing up in Eastern Oregon, “in the middle of nowhere,” she says:

There was always a dance teacher, traveling studios – they used to have a lot of those back then. I had training in high school cafeterias and somebody’s attic.... My first dance teacher was actually a Broadway dancer, and she married a teacher and they ended up in Eastern Oregon. We got to do some wonderful things (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Zreliak later went on to pursue formal study in dance at the University of Oregon and received her bachelor’s degree, as well as some graduate training. In her early teaching career, Zreliak attended

dance conferences and workshops as often as possible to stay abreast of the newest developments in dance education.

Zreliak believes in the importance of hiring quality, kid-focused teachers. When her studio was larger, she created a teacher apprentice program wherein more experienced dancers would assist with a class in exchange for a free class for themselves. The apprentices learned solid technique as dancers, and also teaching skills such as classroom management techniques (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). Should she need to hire additional teachers, Zreliak would first ask for recommendations from other studios and dancers she respected, and then hold an audition to watch candidates teach. Said Zreliak, “you can be an amazing dancer without having teaching skill” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Goals

On Your Toes has very clear short term and long-term goals. Short term, Zreliak hopes to “to keep the doors open” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). The recent economic downturn has impacted the studio, as has increased competition from new studios in the Eugene area that offer similar classes. Zreliak hopes to ride out the next few years and move forward to implement long-term goals. Long-term, Zreliak would like to see the studio operate with three complementary objectives. First, she envisions offering dance classes at reasonable prices for youth who “want to have fun learning dance” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). Second, she would like to work with an advanced group of dancers and offer them more serious dance training. And third, she would like to bring this elite group of dancers into the community to offer classes at no cost. Zreliak has done such community outreach in the past at local organizations

such as Looking Glass⁴, and finds this work rewarding (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). As noted above, Zreliak's long-term goals for the studio include becoming a nonprofit organization.

Partnerships and Community Engagement

From its inception, On Your Toes has engaged in outreach activities and partnerships with local organizations, primarily in the form of free performances.

When we first started the studio, basically, all of the studios had an end of year show and that was it. We were one of the first ones to start performing at all the different in town venues and then venture out of the state and then venture out of the country (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Zreliak estimates that the On Your Toes and ZAPP dancers do about 50 free performances per year, everywhere from "parking lots to performance halls" (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). The studio's impressive resume lists many benefit performances for organizations such as Food for Lane County, McKenzie-Willamette Hospital, International Year of the Volunteer Convention, and Courageous Kids (http://on_your_toes.homestead.com/ZappResume.html). With the exception of one annual paid gig, all of these performances are unpaid. This extensive outreach benefits the studio in that it generates word of mouth advertisement and creates familiarity with the ZAPP or On Your Toes name.

Zreliak also noted informal partnerships with other dance studios, many of them owned by former ZAPP dancers. For example, The Dance Factory, another Eugene dance school and OYT have enjoyed a mutually supportive relationship. The founder of the school created an environment

⁴ Looking Glass is a private, nonprofit organization that serves at-risk youth and families. Programs include counseling, 24-hour crisis intervention, substance abuse treatment, education and vocational training (<http://www.lookingglass.us/pages/aboutus/index.htm>).

that was “not competitive. He was always looking for ways to advance both of the schools” (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009). Now owned by Lisa Gilliam, a former student of Zreliak’s, The Dance Factory often collaborates with OYT in performance. Furthermore, Gilliam’s biography cites Zreliak as one of her main sources of inspiration:

As a veteran ZAPP dancer from 1990-1999, [Lisa Gilliam] greatly admires Cindy Zreliak, director and owner of ZAP Productions. For the past two years [Gilliam has] had the privilege of being a guest artist at ZAPP shows as well as hosting ZAPP at Dance Factory shows (<http://www.eugenedancefactory.com/3/miscellaneous1.htm>).

While On Your Toes is currently engaged in significant outreach, and some partnerships, Zreliak does note that she would like to create more partnerships in the future (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009).

On Your Toes School of Dance is one of the older dance schools in the Eugene area, having trained thousands of young dancers in ballet, jazz, hip-hop, and lyrical dance. Founder and Director Cindy Zreliak is an important leader in community-based dance in Eugene, not only as a dance teacher, but also as a mentor to emerging dance teachers. Her ZAPP performance group brings dance into the community through its dozens of free performances, enriching the dance scene with original contemporary dance. On Your Toes is an outstanding example of the type of dance studio in which many dancers, both amateur and professional begin their training.

Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center

The City of Eugene's parks and recreation program at Amazon Community Center, in partnership with the University of Oregon's Talented and Gifted (TAG) Program offers classes in the visual and performing arts, including dance classes for pre-school through teen and adult participants. The program, in its 10th year of collaboration, offers a diversity of classes at Amazon Community Center, with access to dance and theatre studios, fine arts studios, and beautiful outdoor space. Classes and workshops, taught by professional artists and educators, "allow young children, youth and families to take part in wonderful enrichment activities in a fun and supportive environment" (<http://www.uoregon.edu/~tag/>).

The program's current coordinator, Jim Robinson bridges the two organizations and provides programming leadership. Robinson is a retired school director from San Francisco who now works as an art teacher, as well as the coordinator for the Amazon program. While Robinson does have some dance background, he is not a dance teacher. Consequently, his perspective on the Amazon program was that of an administrator, rather than an administrator/educator, as for the other three case study participants. Robinson agreed to participate in a half-hour, in-person interview. Following is the summary of my interview with Robinson, as well as analysis of the program's website and brochure.

Figure 4:
At-A-Glance: Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center

Founded	The program is in its 10 th year of collaboration between the University of Oregon’s Talented and Gifted Program and the City of Eugene.
Programs	Programs include classes in the visual and performing arts, as well as after-school programs, spring break programs, and summer offerings. Dance classes include: Dance Sampler I and II and Pre-Ballet I and II for Preschool children; Modern Ballet and Polynesian Dance for ages 6-12; Hip-Hop, Swing, Belly Dance, and Afro-Latin Jazz Dance for teens.
Ages	3 years through teens and adults
Cost	Classes average \$30-\$35 per 5-week session. Approximately \$6-\$8 per instructional hour.

Organizational Structure

The dance classes at Amazon Community Center emerge from a highly unique partnership between the Amazon Community Center, of the City of Eugene’s Recreation Division and the University of Oregon’s Talented and Gifted (TAG) program in the Department of Education. The partnership, which is open to all youth, not just TAG-identified children, provides “excellence in art classes” with professional artists and teachers (City of Eugene Recreation Services, Author, n.d.). This is an example of a community-based dance program that has established a relationship and formal partnership with a university to expand its capacity. While the Amazon program offers a wide range of visual and performing arts classes, for the purpose of my research, I focused exclusively on its dance offerings.

Jim Robinson acts as the UO Youth Enrichment Coordinator. While Robinson is “technically employed by the University of Oregon, with the TAG program ... [he] is basically here to run all of the arts at Amazon, which is operated by the City” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). Robinson explains that he is “basically like a city employee – I

just don't get my paycheck from them" (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

Robinson's office and day-to-day operations are at Amazon Community Center, where his colleagues are City of Eugene employees. But he still works closely with the small staff at TAG to carry out the program's mission as well. He notes, "You have to have really good people skills to juggle this" because it is a "very strange job and it's a difficult job". He continues, "Fortunately, all of the people here are wonderful. All of the people, from TAG and from the City, are wonderful to work with" (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

The terms of the partnership are fairly well defined. The City of Eugene provides the facility, namely Amazon Community Center and its theatre, dance, and fine arts studios, as well as some larger pieces of equipment. The TAG program pays Robinson's and the instructors' salaries, as well as all of the basic supplies. Earned revenue goes to TAG, who in turn pays the City a percentage for overhead. The City handles program registration through its "RecEnroll" system, and markets classes online, as well as in its Recreation Services guide. To the public eye, the program looks and operates like any of the other parks and recreation programs offered through Amazon Community Center.

Such a partnership yields organizational rewards and frustrations. Robinson notes many of the benefits of the partnership, for instance, "the City is very gracious...basically the whole City system is open and available for me to use, and we network a lot" (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). Working with City employees, Robinson has experienced colleagues off whom to bounce ideas; "they have parallel programs that they run, so they know the ropes" (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). The City of Eugene also provides

limited funds for scholarships. On the other hand, such a partnership can be frustrating, in part because the organizations both come with their own bureaucratic systems:

The computer is the City; the awful [registration] system is the City. And then TAG is the University. So you're dealing with two big systems... You're dealing with two different sets of funding and it can be really exasperating...it's two different formulas. We get along great, but we're not always on the same page (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

Overall, the benefits of the structure of the program include an increased ability to offer arts classes, including dance, for youth as well as adults.

Programs

The programs offered at the Amazon Community Center are diverse and abundant. Dance classes are offered for preschool aged children through teens and adults and include such idioms as Pre-Ballet, Dance Sampler, Modern Ballet, Hip-Hop, Bellydance, and Swing. Classes are held in dance studios with full-length mirrors and ballet barres (<http://www.uoregon.edu/~tag/>). According to Robinson, the Preschool dance classes are among the strongest programs that he offers; “we have several sets of those classes that happen during the week and on weekends. And they’re strong – they’re bread and butter classes” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

At Amazon Community Center, the youngest dancers may choose to try different dance styles or focus on ballet. The Dance Sampler classes for 3-5 and 4-6 year olds introduce the basics of modern dance, creative movement, ballet positions, and tap. Pre-Ballet classes, also for 3-5 and 4-6 year olds highlight ballet terminology and positioning, turns, skips, leaps, waltzes, and stretches. Classes culminate in mini-recitals (City of Eugene Recreation Services, Author, n.d.). As children get older, course offerings become more specialized and progressive, although beginning dancers are

always welcome to join classes. Classes for older students include Hip-Hop, Afro-Latin Jazz dance, and Bellydance and highlight music, rhythm, and choreography.

When Robinson began working as the UO Youth Enrichment Coordinator, about 9 months ago, he inherited a program was in a bit of decline, enrollment wise. He says, “I don’t understand why this program isn’t hotter than it is. The site, the arts studios, especially the ceramic studios and the dance studios are really good, and I’m surprised that it isn’t stronger” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). The previous program coordinator had flooded the program brochure with class offerings to attempt to draw participants. Robinson employed the same strategy. For Winter and Spring, he offered 67 classes in all of the arts. “I kept the good ones that we already had, and looked back over what had flown in the past, and then just created a whole bunch more” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). Out of those 67 classes, some new, some repeat offerings, only about a third of them actually filled, in part because the economic recession hit at the exact same time. “We had some great things, but a lot of them didn’t fly. Only the strongest classes are surviving” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). Robinson continues, “We’ve been hit by the recession, and we’re going to have to do some fine-tuning” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). One strategy he employed to make classes more appealing in light of tough economic times was to shorten the session lengths from 10-12 weeks, to 5-6 weeks, in hopes that families could afford smaller commitments. This strategy doesn’t seem to have worked; “I don’t think it made any difference at all, and it was a whole lot more work for me. The people who had money are still coming” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

Robinson has worked to expand his dance programming by offering new classes such as Ballroom Dance, Mother-Daughter Bellydance, and Sensory Motor Integration. Some like the Bellydance and the Sensory Movement class were very successful and filled immediately. Others, like the Ballroom class, did not have enough participants to run the class (typically, a class requires 5-7 enrolled students to break even). Robinson discusses the challenges of piecing together a comprehensive dance education program:

I would love to have tons of dance here, I really would. There are so many people to teach – the artists are here. But how can we afford them?⁵ How do we make these programs run? That’s the million-dollar question (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

Personnel

Robinson, a former school director, is no stranger to the process of finding and hiring qualified arts teachers. When looking for teachers for the Winter and Spring sessions, he placed a help wanted ad on Craigslist. He got 60-70 replies, and interviewed about 40 people. When asked what qualities he looks for in teachers, Robinson replied, “I really look at who they are and what I feel. If I feel some excitement from them, if, when we’re brainstorming, I get ideas from them...the big degrees make no difference at all. I’ve interviewed people with Master’s and PhDs and they can be awful teachers” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). In addition to trusting his instinct, Robinson looks to the teacher’s resume and particularly notes prior experience working with kids, in settings such as summer camps. “If you can’t manage kids, it doesn’t matter how good you are” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

⁵ Dance teachers for the Youth Enrichment Program typically make between \$12-\$15 an hour, depending on experience. As a dance educator myself, having worked at nonprofit organizations and dance “camps” in Eugene, I have been paid \$15-\$20 an hour. Unfortunately, no other data on pay scale was available for the other case study sites, as a comparison would have been relevant and interesting.

Robinson mentions a few of his dance teachers that he considers to be standouts. “I’ve got two teachers that are very, very good with children” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). These teachers tailor their lessons and adapt their energy to meet the needs of the age and population that they’re working with. According to Robinson, the most successful dance teachers for the pre-school dance program use showmanship to their advantage; “One teacher I have, the dancer, she’s just perfect for ballet. She creates this image for the kids and they eat it out of her hand. It’s theatre, basically, it’s theatre” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

Goals

In his relatively short time in this position, Robinson has already identified several goals centered on making the program stronger. “The reason I took this job is because I think it has great potential, and I’d really like to get it put back together and really strong. Not just a little arts and crafts after school place, but a real arts center” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). While the dance program is one of the strongest of all of the arts, he envisions adding new genres of dance – ballroom, for one. Another goal of his is to get senior citizens involved, believing that there is both a need for the programming, and a market. He has started a couple of classes in drawing and painting for adults and “got a bite” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

Another goal that is steps away from realization is the creation of an arts-based after-school program for youth. FAME, or Fun Arts Mania Extraordinaire, will offer visual arts, theatre and dance. Robinson started a pilot program in January, with after-school offerings on Tuesdays only and about a dozen kids. In the fall, the goal is to expand the program to five days a week, with bussing from local elementary schools.

Partnerships and Community Engagement

In addition to facilitating the collaboration that shapes the youth enrichment program at Amazon Community Center, Robinson engages in other partnerships. A recent example was connected with a Hult Center performance by modern dancer Ronald K. Brown, and his company. Working with Carol Philips, Programming Manager at the Hult Center for the Performing Arts, and the Bethel School District, Robinson created a series of classes and workshops for socio-economically disadvantaged youth from the Bethel district. Ronald K. Brown, a dancer and choreographer known for his work with at-risk youth, was brought to Eugene one week before his scheduled performance to work with the youth in an after-school setting. Brown and his dancers conducted a four-hour workshop with the students, who also received free tickets to the Hult Center show. Robinson brought in an additional dance teacher from the University of Oregon to teach a two-week class after Brown departed. The workshop and subsequent dance explorations were centered on photography, echoing the way in which Brown is currently working. Students were asked to take photos of their home life and community; they later shared their photographs and did improvisational dance about the images.

Robinson describes the partnership as successful, but “labor intensive.” He continues, “You’d be amazed at how many meetings and calls. There was a lot of coordinating because we had to work with the schools; we had to work with the after-school program. We had to coordinate sites, bussing, you name it” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009). Still, this type of partnership is a real priority for him and his colleagues at TAG and the City; “TAG couldn’t really afford a dancer for two weeks. We did it anyways” (Robinson, J., Personal Communication, April 20, 2009).

The Youth Enrichment Program at the Amazon Community Center is an example of a partnership that brings together the resources and talent of two institutions to strengthen local dance offerings. Although the program encompasses all of the arts, the dance education component of the program is one of its strongest, particularly for preschool aged children. The dance classes in this program are affordable and offer youth, as well as adults, a chance to try out many different types of dance, thus acting as a gateway into dance education.

Summary

Each of the four interviews I conducted yielded important insights into community-based dance education organizations. When examining each of the programs' structure, programs, personnel, goals, and partnership, I found many similarities, but also striking differences. In the next chapter, I will analyze my findings and will connect my research to themes and trends in the dance education literature.

Chapter Four: Discussion and Recommendations

Introduction

As few opportunities exist for youth to study and participate in dance during school hours, community-based organizations often act as an entry point for dance education in the United States. Community-based dance education programs take place in private studios, nonprofit organizations, and recreation programs, among other sites. While the literature does address dance education in academic settings, and as part of larger programs for “at-risk” youth, a comprehensive discussion of community-based dance education is lacking. This research contributes to the national dialogue on dance education, community arts, and out-of-school time.

This study sought to describe and understand community-based dance education in Eugene, Oregon. Four study sites were purposively selected, including two nonprofit dance education organizations, Sparkplug Dance and Ballet Fantastique; one privately owned studio, On Your Toes School of Dance; and one program that is a partnership between the University of Oregon and the City of Eugene, the youth enrichment program at Amazon Community Center. This research explores the organizations’ structure, goals, programs, personnel, and partnerships and community engagement as a means of providing dance teachers, arts administrators, and other dance education professionals with a greater understanding of community-based dance programs.

Data Analysis

For each case study site, I conducted an interview with the administrator, owner, or founder, and analyzed organizational documents to the extent that they were available. I examined each organization through the lens of my research questions, as set forth in Chapter One:

- How are community-based dance education programs structured?

- How are these programs funded?
- What kinds of programs do community-based organizations deliver?
- Who are the teachers in such programs and how are they trained and/or hired?
- How do the goals of community-based dance education programs relate or differ?
- What kinds of partnerships exist between community-based dance education programs and K-12 school systems or the larger community?

The results of my interviews and analysis, described in Chapter Three, revealed significant similarities and differences between the four programs. In the following section, I will discuss common themes and will relate my findings to the dance education literature. I will also make suggestions for further opportunities for research in the field of community-based dance education.

Organizational Structure

The organizations in this study share similar traits - they offer dance classes for youth in jazz, tap, ballet, hip-hop, and/or creative movement in out-of-school settings. They each exist within the geographical and cultural milieu of Eugene, Oregon. Beyond these similarities, however, the organizations have striking differences. The very structure of each organization varies significantly, from a sole proprietorship (On Your Toes), to a well-defined City/University partnership (Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center), to nonprofit 501(c) 3 organizations with unique missions (Ballet Fantastique and Sparkplug Dance). From the structural differences emerge a number of cultural and practical differences. As Posey (2002) reflects, “there are probably as many types of dance schools as there are owners, each school reflects the owner’s belief system, values, and experience” (p. 46).

One factor that contributes to the wide variety of community-based dance programs is the specific set of values and/or practices from which organizations emerge. For instance, Ballet Fantastique was founded as a professional training academy, to “meet needs [for ballet training] that we saw not only in Eugene, but in the broader dance training community” (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). Similarly, On Your Toes School of Dance was founded in part to meet the need for a type of dance education that was not yet available in Eugene, continuing study that included jazz dance. On the other hand, Sparkplug Dance’s organizational philosophy includes such broader ideals as, “an appreciation and understanding of the arts, sciences and humanities through engaging in the creative process and meaningful physical activity” (<http://www.sparkplugdance.org/information/introduction/>). The Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center has an equally broad mission, “to provide access to high quality recreational arts and enrichment experiences for the whole family” (<http://www.uoregon.edu/~tag>). The resulting programs are a reflection of the unique founding philosophies and missions.

The four study sites have diverse income streams, including performance revenues, tuition and fees, individual and business donations, City of Eugene subsidies, in-kind donations, and grants. Each of the four dance organizations rely heavily on earned income from tuition and performances, thus making them subject to market forces and economic pressures. Like many performing arts organizations, the earned income of dance classes typically does not cover all expenses. Contributions, in-kind donations, or other kinds of support are necessary to pay for space rental, insurance, music or equipment, teacher salaries, administrative support and scholarships. While dance requires few “props”, expenses can still be high relative to tuition and fees. For instance, Jim Robinson of the Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center noted that his teachers

are paid between \$12-\$15 per hour (Robinson, J., personal communication, April 20, 2009). The cost of one instructional hour at Amazon averages \$6/hour (City of Eugene Recreation Guide, Author, n.d.). To cover the cost of the instructor alone, each class requires two to three enrolled students.

One theme that reoccurred throughout my interviews was the impact of the recent economic downturn. Several organizations noted that their programs had been negatively affected, articulating the impact in varying ways, from a change in attendance, to a re-defining of short-term goals. Jim Robinson, Program Coordinator for the Amazon Community Center's program noted, "we've been hit by the recession, we've been hit hard" (personal communication, April 20, 2009). Both Sparkplug Dance and On Your Toes expressed practical short-term goals that include, "to keep the doors open" (Zreliak, C., personal communication, April 3, 2009), or "to persist in the given climate" (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). Only one organization, Ballet Fantastique, highlighted ways in which the recession might actually create new opportunities for the organization. Executive Director Hannah Bontrager mentioned that the Ballet Fantastique summer session was attracting attention, not just regionally, but nationally and internationally, and speculated that, in a rough economy, serious ballet students might look for programs such as Ballet Fantastique that offer intensive training at a reasonable price (personal communication, April 23, 2009).

Programs

Because I chose to focus on dance programs that offered classes in tap, jazz, ballet, hip-hop, and/or creative movement, the four organizations have many similarities in programming. All four organizations offer classes for the very beginning dancer, from an early age. Sparkplug Dance's

studio program offers classes for dancers age 3 months to 11 years of age, with a focus on intergenerational parent-child programs, while the other three organizations serve a wider range of students, from three years through teen and adult. While On Your Toes serves advanced dancers, only Ballet Fantastique offers professional level classes through its training academy.

These programs take place in a city with many dance education offerings for youth. Posey (2002) notes that, “the consumer [of dance education] now has a choice of where they will study dance that was not available previously” (p. 47). Such choice dictates that dance programs market themselves and their classes effectively. In essence, dance programs must “offer classes that someone will buy” (Posey, 2002, p. 43). Such attention to market value has an impact on the curricula of the dance program. When my case study participants were asked to reflect on how their program chooses its class offerings, responses were remarkably similar. Jim Robinson, Program Coordinator for the Amazon Community Center’s youth arts program describes his approach:

I looked back over what had flown in the past and then just created a whole bunch more [classes]. And only about a third of them flew... I got a really great group of instructors... some great things, but a lot of them didn’t fly. Only the strongest classes are surviving (personal communication, April 20, 2009).

Robinson, like many other programmers, supplements a set of established classes with new offerings, hoping that some of the new offerings will spark interest and will fill; others never get sufficient enrollment to become classes. On Your Toes’ Cindy Zreliak describes a similar process, “it’s a crap shoot. You keep your ear to the ground, throw out new ideas, and see what works” (personal communication, April 3, 2009). Classes usually require a minimum number of enrolled students to run; for the Amazon program, the number is 5-7 students. Ballet Fantastique, whose academy offers training in a semi-private setting, employs a different approach:

Our class offerings are almost wholly determined by the training needs of the dancers and the students we serve. When we have three or more young students (age 10 or over) who are ready and interested in starting to train more intensively, for example, we will try to recruit the additional students needed to start a new Introduction to Classical Ballet class. Often, we will start the class anyway and hope to build enrollment as the school year continues (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008).

Tuition for dance classes at each of the four organizations was also variable. Prices ranged from approximately \$6 to \$16 per instructional hour. Classes for very young students tended to be more expensive (for example, approximately \$16/hour at Ballet Fantastique and \$12.50/hour at Sparkplug Dance). The dance classes at Amazon Community Center were the least expensive of the four organizations' offering, likely because of the partnership with the City of Eugene's recreation program. In fact, the welcoming message within the City of Eugene Recreation Guide highlights its program's affordability and invites individuals to "enrich your life" by taking classes "without spending a small fortune" (City of Eugene Recreation Services, Author, n.d.). It is noteworthy that each of the four organizations is committed to making their programs accessible through scholarships and additional forms of assistance. Sparkplug Dance offers a sibling discount and sliding scale, and On Your Toes also offers work trade to students with financial need.

One unexpected finding in my research was that for each of these four organizations, studio dance classes are just one aspect of their overall programming. The organizations are multi-faceted and full of breadth. Studio classes may be the focal point of their endeavors, but other types of programming complement the organizations. For instance, Ballet Fantastique, while founded as a training academy, also houses a professional chamber ballet company and participates in significant outreach activities. Sparkplug Dance engages in school residencies, performances, and classes in the community, and trains teachers in concept-based creative dance and movement. On Your Toes

participates in dozens of free performances in the community each year. And the dance classes at Amazon Community Center are part of a wide-ranging visual and performing arts program that includes an arts-based after school program as well as individual classes. These are dynamic organizations that create many different types of dance education opportunities through diverse programming.

Personnel

While none of the four organizations cited a formal dance teaching credential as a necessary qualification, each mentioned the importance of hiring teachers with sound dance training, as well as a strong background working with kids. Jim Robinson, of the Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center explains, “I look for experience with kids – summer camps, all that stuff. Because if you can’t manage kids, it doesn’t matter how good you are” (personal communication, April 20, 2009). Great teachers are necessary, not only to deliver pedagogically sound dance training, but also to maintain the positive reputation of a program. Says Sparkplug’s Rachael Carnes, “When you come into take a class, it better be good. And that’s why, if I have a teacher who has a hard time, they get talked to” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008). Anne Green Gilbert (2005) elaborates on the importance of quality teachers in a program. Teachers who facilitate a love of dance in their students help keep studios thriving. Gilbert says, “If students of any age feel safe, happy, and engaged they tell their parents they want to keep dancing” (p.33).

The importance of training and professional development is another theme that emerges frequently in the dance education literature. Posey (2002) notes that:

Competition between schools of dance is effectively improving the quality of dance education available to the public. Dance educators are well aware that they must continue to

increase their expertise as they practice. Teacher training and mentoring of new teachers is expected; on-going education is demanded of anyone entering the field of dance education in the private sector (p. 47).

Werbrouck (2004) believes that continuing dance education is essential for teachers, both personally and professionally, and cites several ways that dance educators can keep up with developments in the field: through books, journals, videos, classes, conferences, and performances (p. 67). Cindy Zreliak, of On Your Toes School of Dance, mentioned the importance of attending dance conferences and watching dance through media such as videos or MTV in informing her work, particularly in the early years of owning a studio (personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Professional development and ongoing training can mean many different things to community-based dance educators, however. For example, a teacher of tap dance at a privately owned studio may look to an organization such as the International Tap Association for professional membership and training opportunities (<https://www.tapdance.org>). Another teacher at the same studio may engage in collaborative choreographic methods training at Jacob's Pillow, an international dance festival (www.jacobspillow.org). Such diverse opportunities may lead to confusion about what kind of training creates qualified community-based dance teachers.

In lieu of seeking training or certifications from outside organizations, some dance educators opt to create their own teacher development programs. Tori Rogoski (2007), a dance school owner, describes ways that dance educators and/or administrators can improve the quality of their teaching staff in-house. Upon finding that new teachers with outstanding dance technique were lacking teaching skills, she implemented both a mandatory teacher training, as well as a class assistant apprentice program. Such a program had positive affects on dancer and parent satisfaction, as well as a positive impact on class enrollment. On Your Toes' Zreliak has employed a similar program to

train teachers in her studio, offering advanced dancers an opportunity to apprentice with her in exchange for a free class (personal communication, April 3, 2009). Her success in this approach is evidenced by the number of local dance studios owned by former students of On Your Toes. Similarly, Ballet Fantastique offers new teachers on-site mentoring and training in a particular pedagogy, the Russian Vaganova Method, and its syllabus through observation, feedback, and teaching experience (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). Sparkplug Dance requires of its teachers specific training in brain-compatible, concept-based creative dance, and offers a weeklong training in the summer through Lane Community College, as well as opportunities for instructors to team teach and/or intern with Carnes, before taking on a class of their own.

Anne Green Gilbert, of the Creative Dance Center in Seattle affirms this approach to in-house training, noting that, “until more universities and colleges are able to offer comprehensive and well-rounded dance education programs, perhaps private organizations and individual master teachers will have to take on the training” (Gilbert, A.G., 2005, p. 33). The examples gleaned from my four case study sites indicate a powerful presence of grassroots teacher training and point to a need for more of this kind of training. The teachers and administrators of my case study sites are codifying their training methods, creating more formal pathways to teacher skill acquisition, and adopting rigorous standards for their teaching staff educators. They are creating important networks of teacher training for future dance educators.

Goals

The goals of each of my case study sites are as varied as the organizations themselves. Short term, each of the four organizations focused on practical matters, for instance, “making the program stronger” (Robinson, J., personal communication, April 20, 2009), or continuing to “grow in a way

that is both sustainable and also keeping with our mission” (Bontrager, H., personal communication, November 8, 2008). As discussed earlier, the economy has caused at least two organizations to frame short-term goals in rather no-nonsense terms; “Just to persist in the given climate” is a goal of Sparkplug Dance’s Carnes (personal communication, November 21, 2008), and Cindy Zreliak, owner of On Your Toes, echoes that she aims to “keep the doors open” (personal communication, April 3, 2009).

Focusing on the practical aspects of running an organization has not hampered these organizations’ ability to dream and shape long-term goals that, while lofty, seem achievable. Robinson envisions Amazon Community Center as a “real arts center,” one with diversified programming, a thriving arts-based after school program, and a range of programs for senior citizens (personal communication, April 20, 2009). Ballet Fantastique’s long-range vision is to grow administrative staff, Northwest arts presence, and donor and audience base, as well as the budget to support this capacity building. On Your Toes envisions itself as a nonprofit organization with a three-pronged approach to dance education: first, offering fun, recreational classes, second, providing more serious training for advanced students, and third, offering free community outreach programs taught by the senior dancers. Finally, Sparkplug Dance envisions that, “one day, ideally, there would be no need for Sparkplug Dance. It would be a planned obsolescence because the project has embedded itself successfully in the programs that need it most” (Carnes, R., personal communication, November 21, 2008).

The four study sites display goals related to engaging with the community and bringing dance (often at no charge) into schools and other community venues. It will be interesting to watch in the upcoming years how recent federal legislation promoting community service through the arts

will impact such goals. President Barack Obama's campaign commitment to arts education, has recently taken shape in the Serve America Act⁶. Provisions that include music and arts education in Education Corps activities will encourage the use of "skilled musicians and artists to promote greater community unity through the use of music and arts education and engagement through work in low-income communities, and education, health care, and therapeutic settings, and other work in the public domain with citizens of all ages"

(http://www.independentsector.org/programs/gr/National_Community_Service.htm).

The National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) is another resource that helps dance educators and organizations meet their goals. The organization also articulates goals for the field of dance education as a whole. NDEO Executive Director and prominent dance scholar, Jane Bonbright echoes the commitment to providing access to dance education that my study site participants describe; "We do not rest until ALL students in America have equal opportunity, and access, to high quality dance arts education regardless of gender, age, interest, ability, or culture (Bonbright, J., 2007, p. 11).

Partnerships and Community Engagement

Partnerships and community outreach or engagement are of importance to each of my four case study sites. While each organization takes a different approach to engaging with the larger community, each is committed to service and partners effectively with other organizations, agencies, or institutions. Interestingly, the case study participants cited fewer examples of partnering with other dance or dance education organizations than I anticipated. The dance education literature speaks to this concern, saying that dance educators must come together as a "cohesive catalyst" for

⁶ The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, signed into law on April 21, 2009 will expand service opportunities supported by the federal government, focusing on such targeted areas as veterans services, the environment, disaster relief, and arts education (http://www.independentsector.org/programs/gr/National_Community_Service.htm).

change (Cohen & Posey, 2002, p.68). Cohen and Posey (2002) suggest dance educators look to the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO)'s leadership to coordinate and make connections within the dance community. Such connections are very possible in a mid-sized city such as Eugene, where dance educators typically know each other personally, or are at least aware of each other's work. Cohen and Posey (2002) encourage dance educators to share best practices, understand and gain respect for each others' cultures and missions, and advocate dance education as a united community (p. 69).

The specific ways in which each case study site engages with the Eugene community are varied. The Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center exists within a long-standing partnership between the City of Eugene and the University of Oregon, bringing the resources of both organizations to the table to create quality arts programming. Furthermore, the program coordinator, Jim Robinson, has used his personal as well as professional networks to collaborate on projects that reach disadvantaged youth. On Your Toes School of Dance shares dance with the community through free performances at a variety of venues. Owner and director Cindy Zreliak estimates that her dancers engage in at least 50 such outreach activities each year. Sparkplug Dance's founder Rachael Carnes is actively involved in school residencies, teacher trainings, public speaking engagements, and workshops, and creates partnerships through her extensive network of professional contacts. Finally, Ballet Fantastique prioritizes outreach and education by working with local public elementary and middle schools with few in-school arts education programs, and also collaborates artistically with dozens of artists, musicians, and arts organizations each year.

Such partnerships can enhance the position of dance education organizations. The four study sites of this research have created positive reputations for their programs, perhaps in part due to their

community work. In April, 2005, the National Recreation and Park Association website highlighted the partnership that creates the Youth Enrichment Program at Amazon Community Center, citing its ability to provide a full slate of arts- and culture-related classes across a wide range of ages and throughout the year (<http://www.nrpa.org>). Rachael Carnes is one of the area's strongest advocates and oft-requested speakers on dance and arts education; for instance, in October 2008 she was invited to address the Eugene Arts and Business Alliance about the Economic Impact of Brain-Based Arts Learning. The Sparkplug Dance website hosts scores of glowing testimonials from satisfied parents, teachers, students, and organizations (<http://sparkplugdance.org>). Ballet Fantastique's performances have been very positively reviewed in local newspapers, a result, no doubt, of their high caliber training academy and high artistic merit. The organization's Chamber Company was invited to perform at the opening night of Don Quixote at the renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival, what Bontrager calls, "the capstone of a great performance season" (http://www.balletfantastique.org/pdf/OSF_press_release.pdf). On Your Toes has been an established dance school for over 25 years, with former students leading many of the area's newer dance programs and teaching in such institutions as Lane Community College's Dance Department. Clearly, these are dance education organizations whose work is respected by the local community.

Heath, Soep and Roach, in their 1998 study of community-based organizations that worked with youth in the arts found that highly effective organizations shared several characteristics, which I believe my study sites also share. First, they found, that highly effective community-based organizations have such goals as providing opportunities for youth to learn from professionals (p.11). My case study sites all employ professional teachers and artists to share their love of and knowledge of dance. Jim Robinson notes about his Amazon Community Center staff, "I've got real bonafide

artists teaching” (personal communication, April 20, 2009). Second, highly effective organizations create an ethos of Respect, Responsibility, and Relevance with children and young people (p.12). Sparkplug Dance’s Rachael Carnes articulates this quality well, “if there is one thing that pops out [about Sparkplug Dance] is that we set an expectation that children will be accountable and responsible for their own creativity from a very early age” (personal communication, November 21, 2008). Third, and perhaps most importantly, highly effective community-based youth organizations provide opportunities for risk-taking in a safe space, while fostering the attributes of Community, Connection, and Commitment (the three C’s) (p.13).

Partnerships are not without challenges or extra effort. As Jim Robinson states, partnerships are “labor intensive. You would be amazed at how many meeting and calls” (personal communication, April 20, 2009). But the benefits of engaging with other organizations and with the community are great. Ballet Fantastique’s Bontrager says, “we believe that collaboration is key to *any* organization’s continued growth in a fast-evolving arts world, and that it keeps dance interesting and relevant to new and existing audiences” (personal communication, November 8, 2008).

Discussion and Recommendations

Community-based dance education programs deliver quality dance training to youth in Eugene, Oregon. Aside from the obvious similarities between my case study sites - they each offer dance classes to youth, they take place outside of the K-12 or university setting - there are striking differences in organizational structure, goals, programming and personnel, and partnerships. Describing community-based dance education may be more complex than I initially expected, but this study suggests a framework for understanding such programs, and may yield valuable insights for arts administrators and dance educators.

In Chapter One, I defined community-based dance as formal study of dance and/or movement that is taught by qualified dance teachers or teaching artists and takes place in a community setting. This definition was largely one of my own informed creation, as an exact definition of the kinds of dance education programs that I wished to study did not readily exist. The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts (The Guild) offers that community-based schools share the following attributes: “nonprofit, non-degree granting, community-based institutions offering open access to quality arts instruction by professional faculty” (http://www.nationalguild.org/about_schools.htm), but this excludes programs without nonprofit status or housed in parks and recreation programs. Upon review of my case study findings and after further reflection on community-based dance, I would amend my definition to include the following: community-based dance programs are those that not only take place in a community setting, but also actively seek to enhance their community and contribute to the field of dance education through partnerships and community outreach.

The community-based dance programs in this study create networks of teacher training opportunities, engage in programming that moves beyond the traditional technique class, and model ways to create access to dance education in their community. The question arises, do all dance classes held in community settings such as parks and recreation programs, private studios, or community arts centers fit such a definition? To answer this question requires further research. Other dance programs that offer the same types of dance classes or that share the same organizational structure may or may not have the same depth of community engagement and innovation as the four case study sites of this research. Community-based dance education may be difficult to define as a body of practice without more extensive investigation.

Increased numbers of community-based arts programs and the scarcity of dance education in K-12 schools make such investigation critical. Fewer than 8% of all eighth grade students in the United States were found to have regular access to dance education in their schools (NCEP, 1999); community-based arts programs have never been more imperative. According to The Guild, the number of community-based programs in all of the arts has grown considerably since the 1990's (http://www.nationalguild.org/guild_history.htm). As an organization that represents community arts programs, the Guild has increased in capacity and influence to the point where it is developing major new national initiatives and partnerships (http://www.nationalguild.org/guild_history.htm). Such evidence points to a need and a desire for the types of programs that my study sites represent.

Community-based dance education programs act as an important entry point to dance education, perhaps providing a gateway to lifelong arts participation. A more extensive investigation of community-based dance programs is therefore valid and important. I would recommend broadening the scope of this research geographically to include dance education organizations outside of the confines of Eugene, Oregon. I would also suggest including other types of dance education programs. While after-school arts programs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and dance programs for at-risk youth were outside of the scope of this study, I acknowledge their potential contributions to community-based dance education and suggest that they be included in future studies of the field.

While the findings of this research are limited to four individual dance education organizations, they point to important themes and issues that may be discovered during the course of more extensive research. It is my hope that the findings of this research, though not readily

generalized, will yield valuable information for dance educators, arts administrators, and community arts professionals working in the dance education field.

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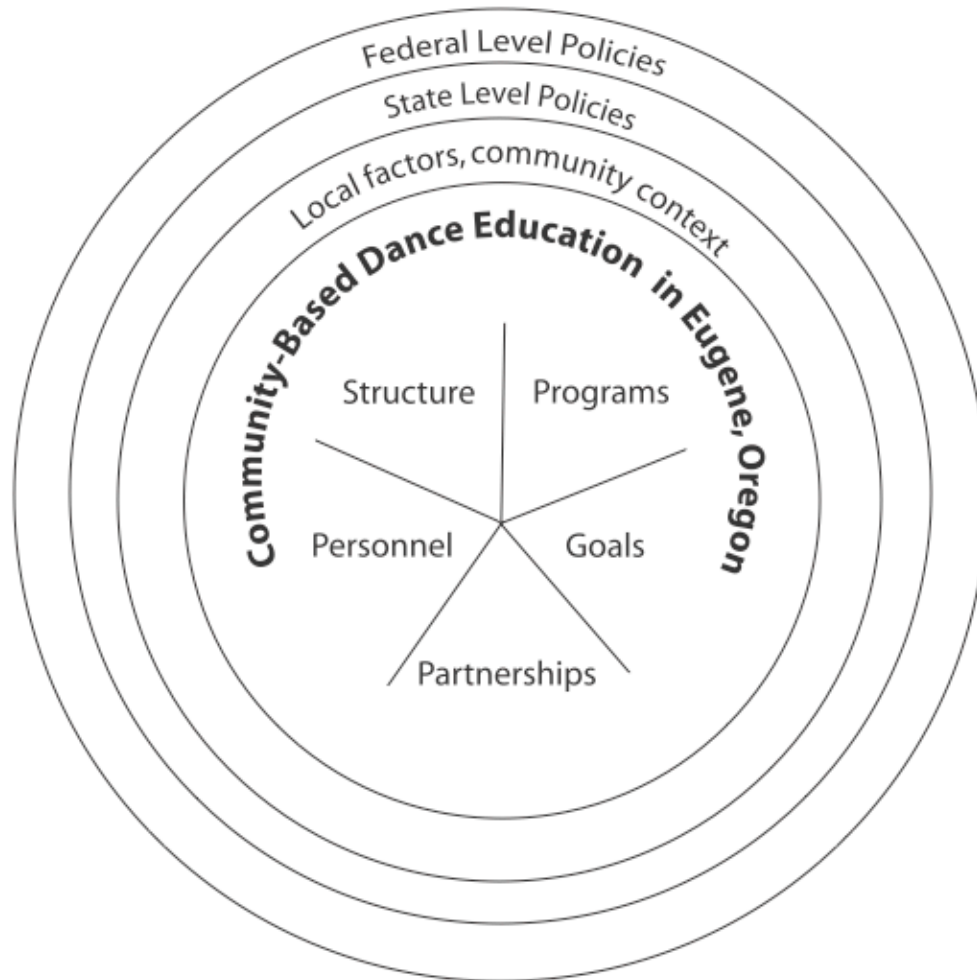
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Appendix A
Conceptual Framework



Appendix B
Document Analysis Form

Case Study:

Date:

Document Location:

Document Type:

___ Report, Article, Book, etc.

___ Government Document

___ Arts Organizations' Written Materials

___ Online Information

___ Notes

___ Other: _____

Reference Citation:

CODING

INFORMATION

NOTES

Appendix C

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. What is your role in this organization? How long have you been involved? Has your role changed from when you were first involved to now?
2. I'd love to know a little about how the organization was started, for example, were there specific values/practices out of which the organization emerged? Or a specific need in Eugene?
3. What sets this organization apart from other dance organizations in Eugene in term of its unique contribution to dance education?
4. What are the short-term and long-range goals of this dance organization?
5. Who participates in your programs and why?
6. How do you choose your class offerings? How has programming changed over time?
7. Who makes up your teaching staff? What kinds of training must these individuals have? Do you offer any training or professional development on-site?
8. What kind of volunteer involvement do you see in this organization? What would you like to see?
9. Does this organization engage in any partnerships (with local schools, community or religious organizations, public programs, etc)? If so, how are they formed and why? What purpose do they serve the organization? If not, do you see any potential collaboration that could be formed?

10. Tell me about the role of your leadership/management team or board of directors. If this organization is a non-profit, is your board a working board, a policy board, a fundraising board, another type of board? How much does the board influence the direction of the organization?

11. What are your main funding sources? How important are donations – from individuals, businesses, and foundations? How do you solicit these funds?

12. Onto a broader topic -what do you see as the future of dance education? Do you see your organization playing a large role in advocating for, or positioning dance education (on a local, regional, or national level)?

13. If you were asked to define “dance education” what would you say? What kinds of movement activities would you include, and where would they be offered?

NOTES:

Appendix D

Recruitment Letter, Interview

Date

My address

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear (potential participant):

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled Community-Based Dance Education in Eugene, Oregon. The purpose of this study is to describe and understand dance education in community settings such as private studios, nonprofit organizations and community programs.

While there is much research about dance education in higher education, and a small, but significant body of research about dance in public K-12 schools, little is known about dance education that takes place outside of these formal school environments. Many, if not the majority of dancers begin their training in such community settings. This study will attempt to narrow a gap in the current research by exploring dance education in Eugene, Oregon.

You were selected to participate in this study because of your leadership position in (Name of Organization) and its contribution to dance education in Eugene. If you decide to take part in this research project, you will be asked to take part in an in-person interview, lasting approximately one hour, during Fall 2008 through Spring 2009. If you wish, interview questions will be provided beforehand for your consideration. Interviews will take place at a site that is convenient for you. In addition to taking handwritten notes, with your permission, I will use an audio recorder for transcription and validation purposes. You may also be asked for follow-up information via phone calls or email.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 541-767-2573 or at tpage@uoregon.edu, or Dr. Lori Hager at (346-2469). Any questions regarding your rights as a research participant should be directed to the Office for the Protection of Human Subjects, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, 541-346-2510.

I will contact you via email within the next two weeks to establish a time and place for conducting the interview. Thank you in advance for your interest in this study.

Sincerely,

Teri Page

Appendix E
Consent Form, Interview

Community-Based Dance Education in Eugene, Oregon

Teri Page, Principal Investigator
University of Oregon Arts and Administration Program

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled Community-Based Dance Education in Eugene, Oregon. The purpose of this study is to describe and understand dance education in community settings such as private studios, nonprofit organizations and community programs.

While there is much research about dance education in higher education, and a small, but significant body of research about dance in public K-12 schools, little is known about dance education that takes place outside of these formal school environments. Many, if not the majority of dancers begin their training in such community settings. This study will attempt to narrow a gap in the current research by exploring dance education in Eugene, Oregon.

You were selected to participate in this study because of your leadership position in (Name of Organization) and its contribution to dance education in Eugene. If you decide to take part in this research project, you will be asked to take part in an in-person interview, lasting approximately one hour, during Fall 2008 or Spring 2009. If you wish, interview questions will be provided beforehand for your consideration. Interviews will take place at a site that is convenient for you. In addition to taking handwritten notes, with your permission, I will use an audio recorder for transcription and validation purposes. You may also be asked for follow-up information via phone calls or email.

Your consent to participate in this interview, as indicated below, demonstrates your willingness to have your name used in any resulting documents and publications. This allows for the possibility that your comments, as a representative of your institution, or of the field of dance education, to displease colleagues and supervisor(s). It may be advisable to obtain permission to participate in this interview to avoid these potential social or economic risks related to speaking as a representative of your institution. Your participation is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time without penalty.

I anticipate that the results of this study will be of value to the arts and cultural sector as a whole, especially in Eugene. However, I cannot guarantee that you personally will receive any benefits from this research.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 541-767-2573 or at tpage@uoregon.edu, or Dr. Lori Hager at (346-2469). Any questions regarding your rights as a research participant should be directed to the Office for the Protection of Human Subjects, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, 541-346-2510.

Please read and initial each of the following statements to indicate your consent:

_____ I consent to my identification as a participant in this study.

_____ I consent to the use of audio recording devices and note taking during my interview.

_____ I consent to the potential use of quotations from the interview.

_____ I consent to the use of information I provide regarding the organization with which I am associated.

_____ I wish to have the opportunity to review and possibly revise my comments and the information I provide prior to these data appearing in the final version of any publications that any result from the study.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty, that you have received a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal rights, claims, or remedies. You have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for your interest and participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Teri Page

541-767-2573
tpage@uoregon.edu